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MURDER IN ALL AGES

Matt. W. Pinkerton

MURDER IN ALL AGES

BEING A

HISTORY OF HOMICIDE FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES, WITH THE MOST CELEBRATED MURDER CASES FAITHFULLY REPORTED, ARRANGED UNDER CONTROLLING MOTIVES AND UTILIZED TO SUPPORT THE THEORY OF HOMICIDAL IMPULSE

BY

MATTHEW WORTH PINKERTON

PRINCIPAL PINKERTON & CO.'S UNITED STATES DETECTIVE AGENCY

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MURDER IN ALL AGES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are as many theories explanatory of the introduction of sin into the world as there are different systems of religion and philosophy. Most of the great religious faiths, like Christianity, Buddhism and Mohammedanism, account for the presence of sin, and consequent death, by insisting that man was created perfect and sinless and subsequently fell from his high estate through the influence of temptation. On the other hand, many modern schools of philosophy profess to demonstrate that our first parents were savages, and that mankind began life by advancing, instead of retrograding.

A discussion of this most ancient of all questions would prove alike futile and unprofitable. Whichever theory is adopted, one fact is beyond dispute: the earliest extant historical writings, outside the "sacred books" of different nations, show mankind as existing in a very low state of civilization, and demonstrate that, if "Athens was but the ruins of an Eden and Aristotle but the rubbish of an Adam," a mighty retrocession of the race had early been brought about. In the fullest sense of the term, man cannot do right unless it is possible for him to do wrong. Virtue and vice are complementary to each other, and combine to make up the moral portion of the being we call man, as he at present exists. The expansion of the former and the elimination of

the latter is the greatest problem of life, and its final solution, perhaps ages hence, will elevate humanity to that ideal position which must be the ultimate climax of the Divine plan of creation.

In the meantime, the heart of humanity may be likened to an arena, infinitely broader than the one in the Coliseum at Rome, where men and beasts fought for supremacy, in which the tendency for good—man's true spirit—contends with the inclination for evil—his perverted nature. While this struggle is confined to individual breasts, its effects are world-wide. The triumph of virtue in the heart of Marcus Aurelius gave an humane and kindly ruler to mankind, while the supremacy of vice in that of Caligula, plunged the world into misery and made Rome a vast saturnalia of crime. The same "irrepressible conflict" that produced Alexanders, Borgias and Jeffreys, gave to humanity its Solons, Howards and Lincolns.

The history of this inward war is the history of mankind. We may not look into the hearts of our fellows and note how the battle goes; how the stealing of a penny leads one man on to the gallows, while the repression of an evil thought by another starts in motion a line of action that induces him to devote his life to virtue and self-sacrifice, and merit the commendation of men and the approval of God, but if we intelligently study their acts we can, none the less certainly, know which force is in the ascendency.

It is because of this strife, which continues with greater or less activity until the grave closes over us—unless, indeed, one of the combatants retires from the battle-field, leaving either a saint or a demon behind him—that accounts, whether historical or fictitious, of great crimes and criminals, usually possess a peculiar fascination. We are all subjected to temptation, and, whether we yield or resist, are conscious of an inward conflict. Most good men can recall crises in their lives, where the turning aside from an alluring sin has saved them from a probable career of evil, while, on the other hand, the most desperate criminals can remember yielding to some one temptation that started them upon a course of crime. It is this universal personal knowledge of ourselves that renders

attractive to many of us narratives of criminal doings, even of the most atrocious nature, like murder. By this it is not meant that a large proportion of us have been seriously tempted to take the life of a fellow creature; none the less, however, we can appreciate the struggle that engages the breast of a murderer. The man of forty who, from jealousy, cupidity, revenge or any other motive, kills another, would have recoiled in horror from a like suggestion if it had been made to him at twenty, while at ten he only decided to disobey his mother after the severest struggle of his life. In other words, men fall into criminal lines by gradations, which are swift or slow, according to the strength or weakness of their moral natures.

In this connection the broad and many-sided question of heredity presents itself. That some are born with a predisposition to virtue while others possess an inherent tendency towards evil, is too well established and too generally recognized to admit of doubt or warrant discussion. This inherited tendency towards good and evil has been noticed from the earliest times. The prayer of an ancient Arabian thus quaintly, yet forcibly, expresses it: "Oh! God, be kind to the wicked! Thou hast been sufficiently kind to the good in making them good." The beginnings of the human race were made under conditions of perfect equality, and, but for the introduction of sin into the world, these would doubtless have continued, and all the descendants of Adam been equal in physical make-up, intellectual strength and moral rectitude. Why some are born with an inclination to live in accordance with the laws of God, while others, from their cradles, manifest decided predilections for wrong-doing and crime, it is not given us to know; yet such is the undoubted psychological fact.

After all, this distinction is only relative; many men have successfully fought an inherited tendency to evil, lived virtuous lives and died triumphant deaths; while no end of people, notably well endowed, have entered upon evil courses and gone down to destruction. It is no part of the author's plan to trace the antecedents of criminals and attempt to describe their degree of moral turpitude. But, while men must be

taken as we find them, not as we would have them, our judgments as to the culpability of criminals must always be tempered with charity, and their antecedents and moral make-up be taken into account.

The disposition on the part of humanity to find pleasure in annals and stories of crime has long been observed and taken advantage of by publishers and authors, who have literally flooded the world, more especially this country, with works of fiction in which the basest crimes are depicted and the depravity of the human heart laid bare, too frequently in a manner that casts a glamour over the most heinous offenses against society and the law. In this class of fiction the sympathy of the reader, particularly the young reader, is often with the criminal, whose misfortunes and trials excite feelings of fellowship and pity, and whose escapes and triumphs cause youthful hearts to glow with approval and pleasure. Such books have worked incalculable harm in thousands of American homes. Not only do they degrade and vitiate the literary taste of youthful readers, but they raise false notions of morality, and prove the ruin of large numbers of the young of both sexes.

But, under the skilful hand of an author of ability and learning, who is actuated by lofty motives, vice can be so portrayed as to become hateful, and give, by contrast, to truth, and virtue, and manhood, a brighter hue, a more exalted meaning. No person, boy or girl, man or woman, was probably ever morally injured by reading "Caleb Williams," "Waverley," "Nicholas Nickleby," or "Paul Clifford." The last named is a story of highwaymen. Contrast it with "Sixteen-string Jack," and "The James Boys," and the distinction will become apparent. It is vice as portrayed in the first-mentioned class of books that Pope had in mind when he wrote:

> "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
> That to be hated needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

The author has set himself the task of writing what might, not inappropriately be entitled: "A History of Crime." In

so doing, he modestly hopes to be able to present a series of books that, while attractive and instructive, may prove of some practical value to those interested in the suppression of crime and the reformation of criminals. His aim is even higher than this; he hopes to aid in preventing the growth and development of criminals, by demonstrating that one false step leads to another, and that wrong-doing receives certain and adequate punishment, if not at the hand of the law, in the formation of an evil character, the possessor of which cannot hope to enjoy anything of true happiness.

In the long category of crime, murder, by almost universal consent, is given the foremost place. To deprive a reasonable creature, made in the image of God, of his life, is the perfection, the personification, of cruelty—"All that a man hath will he give for his life." The perpetrator of a deliberate murder has reached the lowest abyss to which poor human nature is capable of falling; he may multiply his crimes, but can hardly become more depraved.

The subject of the present volume is homicide, in all its shades of atrocity, from suicide to premeditated murder. In this offense are generally present the motives, passions and methods that characterize other and lesser crimes, and a perusal of its history will render clearer and more easily understood the volumes that are to follow.

In writing this book the author becomes the chronicler of crime. He hopes to accomplish his task fairly, conscientiously, and with such detail and variety of illustration as, without being redundant and tiresome, will convey a comprehensive idea of the history of homicide, from the jealous and revengeful act of Cain, down to prominent cases within the present memory of the reader. In preparing this work he has spared neither pains nor expense, and has made diligent research for authentic cases illustrative of the various grades of homicide, the different modes of accomplishing it, and the manifold passions and motives that lead to its commission.

Within the scope of this work fall many cases attended with extenuating circumstances, and in which, touching the degree of the perpetrator's culpability, there may well be

differences of opinion. In these, as in other illustrations, the author offers nothing in justification or excuse. His aim is to present the facts and allow the reader to draw his own conclusions. He recognizes no criminal heroes, and the gallantry and generosity of cut-throats are not put forward and balanced against their crimes. "A man must be just before he is generous," declared one of England's greatest jurists, and this truism is sufficient to sweep aside all apologies offered by sentimentalists for criminals who, like Robin Hood and Claude Duval, seemed to possess and exercise certain chivalrous and amiable traits of character.

It is no part of the design of this work to elaborate the horrible or encourage any morbid tastes in that direction. Disgusting details are omitted or treated in a manner not calculated to shock the sensibilities of the reader. At the same time, criminal pictures are not deprived of their just shades and coloring, but stand out in bold relief, contrasting strongly with the praiseworthy acts of honorable and virtuous men. Without aping the style of the novelist, it has been the author's aim to treat the subject in a manner that will render the work pleasing and entertaining, as well as instructive and elevating.

In the ensuing pages will be found some illustrations of crime and the operation of the homicidal impulse that have been drawn from the works of fiction. At the first blush these might seem out of place in a volume dealing with homicide. It must be remembered, however, that the present work comprehends something more than that; it aims to show the motives and temptations that drive men of different temperaments and various environments into courses of crime, and for such purposes a fictitious narrative, written by a close and conscientious investigator of human nature and human action, like De Quincey, for instance, possesses peculiar value. "Fiction," declared Aristotle, the most scientific and accurate of all the philosophers of ancient Greece, "contains more real truth than history." He goes on to explain this seeming paradox by saying that many so-called historical facts are either entire fabrications or have been so distorted in the process of transmission, so often warped and twisted to establish theories,

justify parties and friends, or condemn enemies, as to be altogether unreliable. His definition of a novel, or tale, shows clearly and succinctly why, in his estimation, fiction, if the work of a master mind, contains much of real truth. "A novel," he wrote, "is that department of fiction wherein the characters are represented as acting and the events as ensuing in the same manner as might reasonably be expected on the supposition that the actors had had a real existence." He further explains that history deals with certain individual facts only, as an account of a battle, while true fiction brings together a large number of human actions and experiences, collated by the author from numerous sources, and thus presents a more composite, and hence broader, and more truthful and instructive picture, than a page from history.

The long experience of the author with crime and criminals and his researches among the criminal annals of the past, lead him to believe that, in the civilized society of our day, better impulses predominate than in the centuries gone by, and he is convinced that the present volume will establish this position. Crimes that went almost unrebuked a thousand years ago, are of comparatively rare occurrence now, and excite a thrill of universal horror and indignation. It is no doubt true that there are more arrests and convictions to-day, population being taken into account, than there were a century ago, but, so far from proving that crime is increasing, it rather argues the reverse. It shows the existence now of better laws and a higher moral standard among the mass of the people, leading to more determined and better directed efforts for the suppression of crime. A larger number of offenses are now punished as crimes than a century ago. It is true that the punishment meted out is much less severe—we no longer hang a man for stealing five shillings, but strive to reform and return him to his proper position in society—but, in the aggregate, the number of punishable offenses has been considerably increased. As an instance of this, reference may be made to drunkenness and the restrictions thrown around the liquor traffic. A large proportion of the arrests made to-day are directly chargeable to this innovation.

There is another reason why the great relative prevalence of crime to-day, as contrasted with bygone years, is apparent rather than real. Railroads and telegraph lines have annihilated distance, so far as the transmission of news is concerned, while the multiplication of newspapers renders it possible for us to read every morning of all the unusual or atrocious crimes that were perpetrated and discovered on the preceding day, throughout the civilized world.

An additional explanation of this seeming contradiction may be found in better police regulations and the improved detective methods, which prevail at present. It is not meant that men are now better endowed than were their grandfathers, but rather that they possess greater advantages than did their ancestors. The improvements mentioned in the last paragraph have given an enormous advantage to those whose lives and abilities are devoted to the detection of crime and the arrest and conviction of criminals. In addition to this, the occupation of the detective has been reduced to something of a scientific character. Subject to many variations, it is true, there is still a decided similarity in most crimes naturally falling into the same class. The collection, classification and comparison of a multitude of authentic cases gives the trained detective of to-day a decided advantage over his predecessor, even of a generation ago. Thanks to this, the number of undiscovered crimes is constantly diminishing, while vastly more criminals are arrested and brought to justice, thus adding to the apparent prevalence of crime. The modern detective has one other decided advantage over his predecessor of a hundred years ago: popular sentiment more strongly condemns crime at the present day than it did then. This is due in part to an awakened public conscience, but more largely to the extravagant penalties that were then provided for violators of the law. In England, not much more than a century ago, one hundred and sixty different offenses were punishable with death. Such extreme measures could not fail to provoke animosity to the law, and induce the great majority of the people to shield from death one who had committed only a trivial offense. This lack of coöperation with the authorities,

on the part of the class now denominated "good citizens," was largely responsible for the comparatively few arrests and convictions at the time referred to.

Another explanation of the apparent increase of crime, as shown in more frequent convictions, appears in the circumstance that crimes are less severely punished now than formerly. Terms of imprisonment have been materially shortened during the past century, months, in many instances, taking the place of years. As the law-breaking classes largely consist of habitual criminals, fully half of whose days are spent in prison, it follows that shorter terms mean more arrests and convictions, thus, apparently, increasing the number of criminals. When it is remembered that many old offenders in our large cities have been arrested and sent to prison scores and sometimes hundreds of times, the effect of this cause upon criminal statistics becomes evident.

The author believes that a brighter era has dawned upon mankind; he sees it in more equal and humane laws, in a wider and more general dissemination of knowledge, in the awakened conscience of thousands of men and women who are forgetting something of self that they may reclaim and elevate their fellows. He hopes for more marked advancement in the immediate future than has been manifest in the recent past, and aspires to become an humble factor in the present world-wide movement in that direction.

As suggested in the outset; good, in an active, positive sense, can only exist as a complement of possible evil. When better impulses and, consequently, better actions, have resulted from the conflict of sin and virtue in the universal human breast, humanity will learn that evil was not a mistake or a defeat of the plans of the Creator, but rather a manifestation of His highest wisdom. All that live and err have a place in the great Universal Plan.

> "So man, who here seems principal alone,
> Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
> Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
> 'Tis but a part we see, and not the whole."

CHAPTER II

THE HOMICIDAL IMPULSE

We are so familiar with the crime of murder, from personal observations, gruesome stories and detailed accounts, with which the daily press literally teems, that we have come to regard it almost as a matter of course; a detestable and unnatural thing, surely, but something to be constantly expected. And yet, if we lay aside that indifference, born, not of sympathy, but rather of familiarity, which dulls all emotions, and calmly consider an isolated case of homicide, its perpetration becomes a veritable mystery that we are unable to solve. That one reasonable creature, finding pleasure in the society of his fellows and, in a certain sense at least, loving his neighbor, should take the life of another, appears so unreasonable that, were we not supplied with numerous well authenticated instances, we might, like the Asiatic king, when he first heard of the existence of ice, refuse to believe it possible. It is only when studied in this manner that the awful enormity of this crime, which, should it come to be universally practiced, would speedily exterminate the human race, dawns upon our minds.

The careful study of almost any case of murder, and an analysis of the motives, passions and perversions that led to its commission, will broaden our conception of the character of human nature. Many men have given up their lives that others might live. Although the greatest and noblest of all human sacrifices, that of the Redeemer is far from being the only one that man has unselfishly offered to mankind. Whether we contemplate Arnold Winkelried, as, fired with patriotism, he rushed upon the spears of the advancing Austrian phalanx and died, that his brothers might live and

Switzerland be free, or listen to the rude, but none the less godlike dying words of Jim Bludsoe from the pilot-house of the burning Prairie Belle, "I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank till the last galoot's ashore," our hearts swell and we realize, with Lord Bacon, that if man is connected with the beasts of the field by his body, he is surely joined to God by his spirit.

Contrast a case like one of these with a murder committed from motives of cupidity, and we have before us the heights and depths of human nature and begin to realize something of the immense expanse that separates a truly humane man from one who is vicious and debased; catch a glimpse of the widely diverging paths of virtue and of vice. Yielding to the highest instincts and impulses with which the human race is endowed, one gives up his dearest possession, existence, that his fellow creatures may live and be happy, while the other deprives him of his life for a handful of silver with which to carry on a drunken, licentious debauch.

This contrast renders more than ever inexplicable the existence of a deliberate murderer. But, if it furnishes an object-lesson of the degradation to which man often descends, it shows the lofty elevations that he sometimes attains, and suggests the only rational method for the complete suppression of crime, viz., the moral elevation of the race, which can only be attained through the aid of better physical and consequently higher mental conditions.

By this the author does not mean that crime is not to be ferreted out and its perpetrators punished—this course is as old as the first rude, patriarchal government and will be completely abandoned only upon the materialization of the Millennium —but, that moral education will decrease wrong-doing more rapidly than dungeons, blocks and scaffolds, because it decreases the number of possible subjects upon which that highly contagious disease, crime, may feed and continue to grow.

Many writers have noted as curious the circumstance that the crime most severely punished by the criminal codes of all nations and ages, is the earliest one of which we have any

authentic historical evidence, and that the first accusation or indictment, not counting the disobedience of our first parents, was one on the awful charge of murder—"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

These writers forget that in the opening chapters of Genesis are compressed facts and processes, which, if given in anything like detail, would fill volumes, yes, libraries. Accepting as true the orthodox account of the beginnings of human existence in this world, it is not difficult to find a rational explanation of the enormous crime of Cain. Although disposed of in a few lines, it must be remembered that long years elapsed between the posting of cherubim and a flaming sword to the eastward of the garden of Eden, and the day when "Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him."

In these years, Cain, the first-born of Adam, and of mankind, had cultivated a character and an individuality of his own. Of these we know nothing, except by necessary inference, but this renders clear the circumstance that he had developed marked tendencies to evil. This is apparent from the fact that his offering failed to find favor with the Lord, who, in the meantime, "had respect unto Abel, and to his offering." It further appears that "Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell," when rebuked by the Almighty. But his evil heart is most clearly shown by the words of the Lord: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

The rage aroused in the heart of Cain, impotent so far as concerned his Maker, seems to have been transferred to his brother. Combined with the jealousy that had already found a lodgment there, it started into being what may well be designated the first instance of the homicidal impulse. It would appear that this was intensified by a conversation which he soon after had with his brother. It must be remembered that Abel was born in sin and possessed, consequently, of pride and vanity. What more natural than that he should exult over the acceptance of his own offering and taunt his companion for his failure?

Something of this view is taken by Milton, who thus briefly, yet graphically, describes the first fratricide:

"His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven
Consumed with nimble glance and grateful steam,
The other's not, for his was not sincere;
Whereat he inly raged; and, as they talked,
Smote him in the midriff with a stone
That beat out life; he fell, and, deadly pale
Groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused."

The first murderer has not wanted defenders, and many arguments have been written to justify, or at least excuse, his diabolical act. Of these, perhaps Lord Byron heads the list. In his impassioned mystery, entitled "Cain," he ascribes the rage of the fratricide to a deep-seated feeling that he had suffered injustice at the hands of the Almighty, and puts into his mouth the following impious words:

"His!
His pleasure! What was his high pleasure in
The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,
To the pain of the bleating mothers, which
Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pangs
Of the sad ignorant victims underneath
Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record
Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!"

Byron makes Cain attempt the destruction of the altar and the sacrifice that had found acceptance. Abel opposes him, and Cain seizes a brand from the embers and kills his brother by striking him on the temples.

Whatever view we take of the first homicide, it is apparent that in the long ages that have elapsed since its commission, the brutal passions of man have remained without very substantial changes. Such alterations as can be noted are surely in the line of advancement. In these days of ours, brother sometimes takes the life of brother, it is true, but a modern instance of a fratricide committed before an altar consecrated to the worship of God, and by one who had come there to engage in a most exalted religious ceremony, can hardly be cited. So far, it goes to establish the position of the author,

that the brutish passions and instincts of mankind are, and long have been, undergoing modifications; while, thanks to a higher civilization, the establishment of more lofty ideals and the spread of true religion, better impulses are beginning to permeate and control society.

The case of Cain suggests the origin and nature of the homicidal impulse, a term somewhat vague in its meaning, and hence difficult to accurately define. Whether there is, in the normal human heart, a tendency or disposition to take the life of fellow creatures, as contra-distinguished from a tendency to commit crime in general, has been doubted by many. It is difficult, however, to account for many atrocious homicides on any other hypothesis. The absence of all apparent motive has caused many murder mysteries to go unsolved. Frequently, usually, in fact, the first real clue to the perpetration of a mysterious homicide is furnished by the discovery of a tangible motive. It is this matter that instantly engages the attention of the trained detective, into whose hands a murder case is placed. The first inquiries suggested to his mind are: Who would naturally profit by his death? Had the deceased enemies? Had he so-called friends who may have become estranged through real or fancied injuries? Had he a "love affair" that would be likely to call into play the passions of a jealous rival? Is it not possible that he had done some great wrong and refused to make reparation? Was he of a quarrelsome disposition, and if so, may not his death have resulted from a sudden and unforeseen affray? Was he slain for purposes of robbery? These, and other like questions, are asked and their answers obtained as quickly and reliably as possible. Failing to discover any reasonable motive leaves the detective in a quandary, from which, usually, nothing short of a stroke of good fortune delivers him.

The absence of a motive for the commission of a great crime is frequently employed to decided advantage by the defense, when the accused is brought to trial. Doubtless it often exists in cases where the prosecution is unable to show it. As a matter of fact, however, there can be no doubt that many murders are committed without any definite reason

existing in the mind of the perpetrator, unless it be an inherent disposition, or inclination, to take human life; the homicidal impulse. That actual manifestations of this impulse are rare does not argue strongly against its existence. In the introductory chapter the statement was made that few of us have ever been seriously tempted to take the life of another. It is nevertheless true that most of us have experienced a desire, momentary perhaps, but none the less real, to kill. We have not regarded this as a legitimate temptation, because, thanks to our better nature and the inherent horror with which we regard homicide, the impulse has been of short duration and has left little impression upon our minds. To one of cruel instincts, weak conscience and a predilection to crime, however, the outcome may be far different.

The circumstance that murder is the first real crime recorded by authentic history goes far to establish the theory of homicidal impulse. To a certain extent it is true that the pastoral life of the beginnings of mankind reduced to a minimum the motives and inducements for wrong-doing; yet why should one of the foulest and most unnatural offenses which sixty centuries of sin have nurtured and matured, stand first in the order of time? Accept the suggestion that, as a portion of the dark heritage of sin that has come down to us from our first parents, is included a germ of the same horrid impulse that overpowered Cain and made him a vagabond and a wanderer on the face of the earth, and the solution is comparatively easy. Cain knew nothing of homicide, or, indeed, of death, except that of animals, and could have had no just conception of the enormity and awful consequences of his offense. With little to oppose it, the impulse prevailed, and the deed was done.

That this horrid impulse had thus early found a lodgment in the heart of man, may appear remarkable, but our wonder will disappear when we consider the murderous character of the tempter of mankind, and that the first effect of his beguilements was to introduce death into the world. What more reasonable than that the impulse to slay entered the heart and brain from which all hope of earthly immortality

had been banished? In falling from his high estate, man surely inherited many of the characteristics of the tempter, and why not his murderous impulse?

On this point we have the highest possible authority, that of our Divine Master. In the eighth chapter of the Gospel According to St. John the existence of the homicidal impulse appears to be distinctly stated. The Jews were seeking to kill Christ, and, in answer to his sharp reproaches, boastfully announced that they were "Abraham's children." To which the Master most significantly replied:

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him."

There are many possible interpretations and explanations of passages of Scripture, but to a layman this statement clearly points to an inheritance from the father of falsehood and murder, of a disposition to kill. This text is given additional force from the circumstance that the Jews were bent upon the murder of Christ, and took up stones to accomplish their object, and that he only escaped by rendering himself invisible, "going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

Children, with little knowledge and experience, more nearly occupy the position of Cain than do persons of mature years. Who has not noticed the blind unreasoning rage of a crossed child, and heard infant lips shout aloud the awful words, "I will kill you"? There are exceptions, of course, but most children early manifest a decided disposition to destroy animal and insect life. Many a fond mother's heart has thrilled with dismay at discovering her beloved infant prodigy in the act of pulling the wings and legs off a fly, or decapitating a toad. If these early manifestations of a desire to slay are not chargeable to an inherent germ or impulse, how are we to account for them? Except in rare instances, not from observation or hearsay, surely. What explanation remains unless it be the impulse to take life?

Something of the same kind is observable in matured manhood, although here the exceptions are more numerous. A large proportion of us find a pleasure, vague and indefinable,

but none the less actual, in the destruction of animals. It is this that imparts more than half the zest to the chase. No end of animal life has been wantonly taken, not for the purpose of procuring food and raiment, but for the mere pleasure of killing. What is this but a slight manifestation of that which, unrestrained, becomes the true homicidal impulse?

It is recorded by Suetonius, the great Roman historian, in his "Lives of the Twelve Cæsars," that Tiberius, the second emperor, took undisguised delight in putting his fellows to death. This he did upon the slightest pretext, and in the most cruel manner. In his infancy and youth his favorite amusement was pulling flies to pieces and torturing animals. Nurtured by an ambitious, cruel, and murderous mother, the awful tendency to take life, which in our day education and good example usually eradicate, or at least subdue, was given full sway, became the ruling passion of his life and stamped him as a monster of iniquity.

When Nero, himself one of the best of all historical instances of a man subject to this awful mania, had specially and outrageously wronged the people, how did he placate them? By presenting them with gifts? No; by inviting them to the amphitheatre to see brutish beasts and still more savage men engage in a life and death conflict; to see gladiator hew down brother gladiator, and lions tear the delicate limbs of Christian maidens. A homicide himself, Nero, better than good and virtuous men, understood this death-dealing impulse of the human heart, and the bloody scenes he presented to the populace never failed to make them forget his own oppressive acts and manifest the most intense satisfaction. Other rulers have followed his infamous example, and have usually found that their rude and almost conscienceless subjects fully appreciated the horrid entertainment.

We all manifest a lively interest in occurrences in some respects similar to personal experiences of our own, and we usually excuse or condemn them according to the general rule we have adopted in dealing with like matters that have arisen in our own lives. The suggestion of the homicidal impulse appears to be the only explanation broad enough to cover the

almost universal interest which mankind takes in stories of murder, whether real or fictitious. The columns of a daily newspaper first turned to by nine out of ten, are those wherein are chronicled the homicides and other revolting crimes of the day. The most popular works of fiction have almost invariably been those where the interest hinges on a dark murder mystery. Great novelists, like Dickens, Sue, Hugo, Kingsley, Ainsworth, Dumas and Doyle, have appreciated this demand on the part of the public, and, no doubt, derived a decided personal pleasure in writing to supply it. More than that, many of the greatest works of art, both in sculpture and painting, deal with cases of homicide, often in its most revolting form.

If it is said that this can be accounted for on the principle that there is something fascinating about the horrible and unnatural, the reply is that the horrible only attracts when connected with some form of human depravity, murder far more than any other. We turn with a shudder and a heart-ache from a hasty glance at a ten-line item telling how a poor workman has been caught in a machine and horribly mangled, or another that briefly recounts the fearful sufferings of the victim of a gasoline explosion, and eagerly read, fairly revel sometimes, in a two-column account of a double murder and suicide. The gentlemen of the press well understand this peculiarity on the part of their patrons, and an editor who gave equal prominence and space to harrowing incidents that he devoted to unnatural murders, would soon find himself, like Othello, one of the most famous uxorcides of fiction, without an occupation.

As the author is not desirous of presenting an object-lesson to illustrate the last sentence, he will suspend the work of attempted philosophizing, and pass on to the task he has set himself—the presentation of instances of homicide, from the great fields of fact and fiction.

Among American authors, and those of the whole world might be included, for that matter, few have seemed to delight in the recital of stories of homicide, and a dissection and discussion of the motives that lead to it, to so marked an

extent as Edgar Allan Poe, and few have equaled his work in that direction. Of a supersensitive, morbid nature, and a victim of intemperance in many of its worst forms, he appears to have had an intense sympathy with what we have designated, for lack of a clearer and more comprehensive term, the "Homicidal Impulse." With marvelous, not to say repulsive, fidelity to the smallest and most horrible detail, he seems fairly to gloat over murder. He studied it as an art, and his conclusions, drawn as they were from instances in all ages of the world, are entitled to great consideration. In his tale of "Murello," he gives an excellent instance of the operation of the homicidal impulse. In this work he delineates the desire to kill as springing into spontaneous existence in a human soul, or developing from the encysted germ we have referred to as very possibly existing in each and every breast. Motive, except from this cause, is absent, and not the slightest provocation is offered. The husband of the sad heroine of the sombre tale is represented as being seized with a burning and, apparently, uncontrollable desire for her death. In a recital of his controlling emotions, the murderer is made to say:

"My wife's manner oppressed me as a spell. I could no longer bear the touch of her wan fingers, nor the low tone of her musical language, nor the lustre of her melancholy eyes. She knew all this, but did not upbraid; she seemed conscious of my weakness or folly, and called it fate. Yet was she woman, and pined away daily. In time the crimson spot settled steadily on the cheek, and the blue veins upon the pale forehead became prominent; and one instant my nature melted into pity, but in the next I met the glance of her meaning eyes, and then my soul sickened and became giddy with the giddiness of one who gazes downward into some dreary and unfathomable abyss.

"Shall I then say that I longed with an earnest and consuming desire for the moment for Murello's death? I did; but the fragile spirit clung to its tenement of clay for many days—for many weeks and irksome months—until my tortured nerves obtained the mastery over my mind, and I grew furious

with delay, and, with the heart of a fiend, cursed the days and the hours and the bitter moments, which seemed to lengthen and lengthen as her gentle life declined like shadows in the dyings of the day."

In the estimation of many, the utterance of such words as those quoted above, if taken as honestly expressing the real feelings and sentiments of their user, is clearly indicative of insanity. It is no part of the author's plan to enter into a discussion of this question, yet it may be remarked, in passing, that true instances of homicidal mania have generally been held to be cases of insanity. Long courses of intemperance and indulgence in unnatural practices of many kinds will frequently dethrone the reason and leave the ruling passion in undisputed possession of the citadel. It is with the impulse to take life, as it exists in minds that still retain their balance, still understand their relations to their fellows, that we have to do. The line of demarkation is difficult to draw sometimes, and juries have disagreed in many noted cases.

As all know, President Lincoln fell at the hand of an assassin who was one of a number of conspirators that had determined to accomplish that end. In this case hatred, revenge, a perverted notion of patriotism and a desire for notoriety, were undoubtedly present and united to call into activity the latent or only half-awakened homicidal impulse. Had this last-named and most powerful incentive to murder been absent, it may well be doubted whether Booth would have fired the bullet that removed from scenes of most useful activity one of the best and most conscientious men that ever lived, and plunged a nation into the deepest grief.

The case of Charles J. Guiteau is still more nearly in line. After his cowardly assassination of President Garfield, he was arrested and brought to trial. The only defense offered was that of insanity, which did not avail to save the wretch from the scaffold. In his case the homicidal impulse was unmistakably present; indeed, he clearly manifested it by his conduct in court during his long protracted trial. Guiteau was an egotist of the most pronounced type; his audacious claims had not been recognized, and he, apparently, decided to teach

the world that he was no ordinary man to be thrust carelessly aside, and to gratify his spirit of revenge and the more general impulse to take life at the same time.

These cases will be treated more at large in their proper place, in a chapter on assassination; they are referred to here as illustrating the operation of the homicidal impulse.

Within recent years what is known as the Whitechapel district, in the city of London—one of the lowest and most degraded portions of the great metropolis—has been the scene of a long series of most brutal and, to all appearances, unprovoked murders. The victims were always women belonging to the most abandoned class. Sometimes they were murdered in their wretched rooms, but generally they were struck down in one of the narrow streets, or courts, by which the disreputable district is intersected. Once or twice a half-muffled cry has attracted the police, who found a ghastly, mutilated corpse, but no trace of the murderer.

Like the "Jibbenainosy" of Dr. Bird's famous American novel, "The Nick of the Woods," "Jack the Ripper," as the unknown assassin has come to be styled, sets a mark upon each of his victims. As the reader will remember, "The Nick of the Woods," or "Jibbenainosy" in the Indian tongue, turned out to be a supposed peaceable and inoffensive old Quaker named Nathan, who had suffered a great wrong at the hands of a certain band of savages and had sworn to be revenged. Whenever he killed one of his enemies, he slashed a rude cross with his hunting knife upon the dead man's naked breast, as a mute notification that he had claimed another victim. "Jack the Ripper" always mutilated his victims in a most revolting manner, which was quite surprising, both from its uniformity and from the fact that it seemed to exhibit considerable knowledge of anatomy on the part of the perpetrator. Large rewards have been offered for the arrest and conviction of the monster, but, notwithstanding this, and although the police of London, the detectives of Scotland Yard, and the "Sherlock Holmeses" of the press, have long been put upon their mettle, the mystery, at the present writing, remains as dark and inscrutable as ever. In passing, the author cannot forbear

inquiring why the famous detective-novelist of England does not turn his great talent into actual use and make known the identity of "Jack the Ripper." Very possibly it is because real detective work is more difficult than the unearthing of a criminal whom the author has himself "planted" for that very purpose.

It is possible that the murderer has once, and only once, been seen by a person who has survived to report the circumstance. This was on the night of September 30, 1888, when the bodies of two women were found in the streets. One of the two victims, a Mrs. Eddows, was seen in conversation with a man in Miter Square, Oldgate, but a few minutes before the time, and only a short distance from the spot where her mangled body was discovered. The presumption that this man was her murderer is quite strong. He was described as "aged about thirty to thirty-five; height five feet seven inches, with brown hair and large moustache; dressed respectably; wore a pea-jacket, a muffler, and a cloth cap, with a peak of the same material."

In all, ten Whitechapel murders have been committed. The first mutilated body was found on the night of April 3, 1888, near Osborn and Wentworth streets, Whitechapel; the name of the victim being Emma Smith. August 7th, following, Martha Turner was killed in Commercial Street, Spittal-fields; while on the 31st of the same month the body of Mrs. Nichols was found in Bucks-ras, Whitechapel. On the 30th of September following this crime, the murderous wretch claimed two victims; Elizabeth Strue being killed in Berner Street, Whitechapel, and Mrs. Eddows in Miter Square, Oldgate. On the night of November 9, 1888, the body of Mrs. Jane Kelley was found in Dorset Street, Spittal-fields.

Whether the homicidal impulse of the wretch had become satiated with this long list of victims, is of course not known, but quite a long interval elapsed before he again set his infernal trademark on the body of another unfortunate woman, that of Alice Mackenzie, whom he murdered in Castle Alley, Whitechapel. It was not until February 13, 1891, that he claimed his ninth victim, Frances Coles, whose body

was found in Royal Mint Street. A few days later the tenth and last body was found in the same locality, since which date no well authenticated case has come to light.

Numerous atrocious murders, having points in common with the Whitechapel horrors, committed in England, on the Continent of Europe, and even in the United States, have been ascribed to "Jack the Ripper," but it does not appear probable that he was concerned in any of these. The mutilations were done in a comparatively bungling manner and point to imitators of the original London assassin.

The theory most generally advanced and believed, touching this depraved murderer, is that he has suffered from intimacy with some abandoned woman, probably in the Whitechapel district, and, like Nathan, has sworn vengeance upon her class. Owing to the intervals that elapse between the outrages, many have surmised that "Jack" is a sailor, who makes long voyages. On account of the scientific way in which he mutilates his victims, others have suggested that he is a physician or surgeon.

Although a morbid spirit of revenge probably lies at the bottom of the mystery, the operation of the homicidal impulse seems clearly present. A revenge, however deeply implanted in a depraved heart, would, apparently, be gratified in time, but the vindictiveness of this monster seems absolutely insatiable. Whatever cause lay at the beginning of his awful career, the impulse to kill, which, like jealousy, grows by what it feeds on, no doubt urges him on, and may add other chapters to his horrid work before his own death closes the bloody volume.

The last suggestion receives considerable support from a story recently current in London, which made "Jack the Ripper" to be a medical man of high standing. So long as the identity of the man is withheld from the public, the report must necessarily be taken with considerable allowance. According to the story, the physician in question some years ago developed a mania for causing pain in others. After a time his wife consulted some of his medical friends, who in turn called in the detectives of Scotland Yard. Blood-

stained clothing and other evidences of murder were found in his house, and the opinion was reached that he was none other than "Jack the Ripper." Interrogated upon the subject, he denied all knowledge of the matter, but admitted that there were frequently intervals of twenty-four hours of which he had not the slightest recollection. As a result of the investigation, which was privately conducted, the doctor was confined in an asylum on a charge of insanity, after which the Whitechapel murders entirely ceased. This story, which has about it a strong flavor of "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," may be entirely fictitious, but it suggests a very reasonable solution of the awful mystery.

Those who delight in the possession and exercise of the homicidal impulse, unless, indeed, they have passed completely under its influence, seek some form of justification for the awful crime of murder; not justification to the world only should their dark deeds be discovered, but to themselves as well. Lord Byron makes that evil genius of his, "Manfred," upon the cliff of Jungfrau, say:

> " * * * * I have ceased
> To justify my deeds unto myself—
> The last infirmity of evil."

In seeming obedience to this, trifling injuries are often exaggerated and sustained until the would-be perpetrator can "screw his courage to the sticking place." Indeed, it cannot well be doubted that many acts of revenge, where the injury has been real and great, have been ultimately consummated through the powerful stimulus of the inherent disposition to slay. Commendable, or only slightly reprehensible acts, have often been made to serve this dark purpose. In the latter class falls a curious work written by an English clergyman, named Thomas R. Malthus, about the beginning of the present century.

In the judgment, or rather superheated imagination of this writer, over-population is the impending danger of the world, and vice, crime, and murder itself, are the agencies appointed by the Creator for keeping the growth of the human race within proper limits. His book produced a sensation when it

appeared, and gave rise to not a few curious publications following out the same line of thought. All these later books were ostensibly serious, yet, in the light of after years, some of them would seem to have been satirical, both in conception and expression.

One of the professed disciples of Malthus was an anonymous writer, whose absurd generalizations, probably written in a satirical vein, aroused the animadversion of a large class of hostile reviewers. The critics believed, or professed to believe, that one of the most extraordinary of these Malthusian volumes was an exposé of the ulterior aims of an organized clique. The criticism is, in a sense, amusing, but it is hardly worth quoting. The interest in the publication centers around its contents. The author cites the theory of Malthus as the groundwork of his argument, and follows it out to its legitimate conclusion. He extols slavery and infanticide as legitimate means for the achievement of a great end. In fact, he cites with approval the practice, in the latter regard, of the nations of antiquity, who, in consequence, suffered but little from over-population, and urges the adoption of legislation providing for the killing of all the children of the poor exceeding the limit of three in each family, except in Ireland, where the limit should be one. To carry this design into execution, he advocates the formation of an association under the legislative sanction. He also proposes State supervision of all persons who might not own property of a specified value, who should be required to surrender their children to be put to death by suffocation. To reconcile parents to this wholesale "Slaughter of the Innocents," he would have introduced a virtual system of bribery, granting an income to those who voluntarily parted with their infants, especially liberal rewards being bestowed upon those who rendered themselves wholly childless. By way of defense of his position, he took the ground that parents had no natural right to rear more children than were required by the wants of society. Nor did he concede the inherent right of an infant to its own life, claiming that of this the State was the sole judge. He suggested that mothers might be reconciled to the murder of their babes

by presenting to their minds gay and lively images, and through being taught that it was absolutely necessary that a certain number of children be sacrificed. The massacred infants were to be interred in beautiful colonnades, to be known as "The Infant's Paradise," to be adorned with flowers and plants, and to be enlivened by scenes of chastened recreation. Lastly, the author explained his theory of "painless extinction." Infants were to be asphyxiated during their first slumber, which was thus transformed into the unending sleep of death.

This volume, which is in itself a curio, was published anonymously, and was probably intended as a satire. It was not so regarded, however, by the irate reviewers of the time. They called it "The Book of Murder." One of these indignant gentlemen thus quaintly denounces the hideous joke: "The veil is at length rent; the curtain, behind which have hitherto lurked the most atrocious conspiracies against humanity, has at length been drawn up. With a false and insidious philosophy, they have nourished the most foul and murderous sentiments in their hearts. With the fawning and hypocritical cant of seeking for the safety and peace of society, they have actually plotted and schemed and prepared the means of perpetrating the murder of more than one-half of the infants to be born into the world, the assassination of more than half of the future races of mankind."

The work of Malthus, and even that of the anonymous author referred to, made many disciples. For the most part, these were innocent "cranks," but much evil has been done to mankind through the propagation of such monstrous doctrines. In the ensuing chapter a remarkable instance of this will be given, as further illustrating the homicidal impulse, and showing how readily it is sometimes forced into a state of activity.

CHAPTER III

A CURIOUS INSTANCE OF THE HOMICIDAL IMPULSE

Early in the present century there was committed in several of the smaller cities and towns of France and Germany a series of crimes of a revolting character. Although separate and distinct, they were so far connected that they all resulted from one single motive, and were perpetrated by the same individual, who was entirely without confederates. So far as the author knows, the principal facts were first collected in Howitt's Journal, published more than sixty years ago, and it is from that source that much of the present material has been drawn. The better to present the case to the reader, the matter has been put into the form of a connected narrative, although the salient points remain as they appear in the first published accounts.

One bright morning in 1828, a laborer named Jacques Moulin set out from his home to walk to Puy St. O'Stein, a small village in the province of Languedoc, France. As he approached the quaint old town, traveling along a public and much-frequented highway, he was shot and killed from the roadside. The police were speedily notified, and at once began an investigation, which, however, led to nothing tangible, so far as providing a clue to the identity of the perpetrator. The report of the magistrate who conducted the inquiry showed that the deceased was a quiet, inoffensive man, generally regarded as rather simple-minded. All the witnesses agreed that he had not an enemy in the world, being, on the contrary, a universal favorite with all who knew him. Robbery was evidently not the motive of the crime, for on the body was found a sum of money, small, it is true, but quite as much as a poor peasant could be expected to carry.

The magistrate's conclusion was that the unfortunate Jacques had been mistaken for another person, against whom the murderer had a grudge, or from whose body he expected to secure a substantial sum of money.

And yet the homicide had not been committed entirely outside human sight and hearing. When the first person attracted by the shot arrived upon the scene, he found, seated beside the body, an old man with a wooden leg, who was complacently engaged in reading a well-thumbed book. Upon being brought before the magistrate, this person told quite a coherent and natural story, which failed, however, to throw the slightest light upon the mysterious murder.

He deposed that, while seated upon the river bank, a short distance from Puy St. O'Stein, he was startled by a report from some sort of firearm, which seemed to proceed from the hedge behind him. Then, for the first time, he noticed Moulin, who cried out, "Eh! mon Dieu, Porquoi?" (Oh! My God! Why?), and instantly fell forward upon his face in the dust of the road. When interrogated by the magistrate as to his subsequent conduct, the old cripple explained that he had risen and approached the prostrate man as quickly as the nature of his infirmity permitted. He speedily satisfied himself that life was extinct, after which he looked carefully in all directions in hope of espying the murderer, but was unable to see any one. His crippled condition rendered it impossible for him to raise the body, so he sat down and philosophically awaited the arrival of assistance.

The occurrence excited great interest and wonder in the community, but the utter absence of any conceivable motive on the part of any one to commit the crime, rendered fruitless all efforts on the part of the authorities to discover the murderer.

A few weeks later, at a small tavern on the road leading from St. Gervaise to Clermont, another mysterious and sensational murder was committed. The victim was a man named Auguste Vivier, a traveler, who had stopped at the tavern to procure some needed refreshment. Like the laborer of Languedoc, Vivier was killed by a gun-shot wound.

He was found by the innkeeper and his wife, lying with his face upon the ground, where he had fallen from a bench upon which he had been sitting. It seemed rather a remarkable coincidence that the only witness should be the philosophical old man with the wooden leg, who, being on his way to St. Gervaise, had likewise stopped there for some refreshment. The old cripple stated that while the deceased and himself were sitting on opposite benches, somebody had fired a gun or pistol, he could not say which, from behind the garden paling, when Vivier immediately fell forward to the ground. Crippled as he was, he had been unable to pursue the assassin, or even follow quickly enough to discover his identity, but he had called loudly for help.

Public excitement had barely subsided when a third murder, equally mysterious and seemingly as motiveless, was committed in the neighboring province of Guienne. This time the victim was a silversmith of Lausanne, who, while taking an evening's recreation in a little boat on the Garonne, was fatally shot through the body.

Like poor Moulin, the silversmith was entirely alone at the time the deed was perpetrated, but, as in the former case, there had been a witness. This, as the reader will doubtless surmise, was none other than our friend with the wooden leg. The coincidence went even further, for he was reclining on the bank of the river immured in the contents of his dog-eared book.

Seventy years ago, the rural police of France were undoubtedly easy-going and more interested in discussing the contents of wine cellars than in detecting crime, yet it began to dawn upon them that the literary cripple had fallen into a decided habit of being present when mysterious murders were committed, and, in what may be termed a "lucid interval," they took the old man into custody. The mere circumstance that he had been the sole witness to three assassinations would probably not have sufficed to arouse any special suspicion on the part of these Gallic Dogberrys, but the murdered man had not died without making an ante-mortem statement. Retaining his self-possession, he averred, that while pressing one

hand to his side he had raised himself in the boat and looked about for the murderer. The only person to be seen was an old man lying prone on the grass engaged in reading a book.

What, in those days, was termed a most rigid search, disclosed nothing upon him but a book, a tobacco pouch, and money to the amount of two francs and five centimes—about forty-two cents—none of the articles being to the smallest extent incriminating, or even suspicious.

Being interrogated, he answered without the slightest reserve, seeming rather anxious to give any information in his possession. He gave his name as Armande Geraud, and said that he had served in Marshal Soult's division throughout the campaigns in Italy and Austria. He had saved the marshal's life at Austerlitz, in which battle he had lost a leg. Ever since that memorable day, he had received a pension from Soult. He had a little son at school at Bordeaux, and had been on his way to visit him when taken into custody. He gave his age as fifty-nine, and said that he was a stranger in the province. The notes of the police contained the minute that his complexion was sallow and his countenance thoughtful. His education was above the average, and the cast of his mind rather philosophic. This mental trait, in the opinion of the police, indicated a possibility for the perpetration of fraud which might have induced a disposition toward the commission of a crime of violence. The book which he carried with him, a well-thumbed volume, was a French translation of an English work on "Over-population," by a clergyman named Malthus.

The police promptly investigated the man's story. Marshal Soult not only corroborated the statement of Armande Geraud, as he was supposed to be, but added that the party in question had been a brave and honest soldier, and, in the opinion of the gallant Marshal of France, he was incapable of any base or criminal act. Apparently this confirmed one part of the supposed culprit's story. The next point to be investigated was the parentage of the boy at Bordeaux, and the whereabouts of the latter. Inquiry was made at the latter point concerning the alleged son of Geraud. For a long time no child answering

the description given by the prisoner could be found at any of the schools in that city. At length it was learned that a boy of thirteen years had, within a comparatively recent time, left one of the pauper schools of the municipality to secure employment in a small shop of disreputable character in the suburbs. Here he acted as shoeblack and errand-boy. Upon gaining this information, the police notified the suspected murderer of what they had ascertained. The old man seemed to be completely overwhelmed with grief. His acting, if acting it was, was so consummate that, joined to the reports elicited through the investigation, the police did not for a moment doubt his innocence. Accordingly he was discharged from custody, and a few francs were given him by the magistrate in order that he might be enabled more comfortably to pursue his journey toward Bordeaux, whither he went with a view of rescuing his unfortunate child from the disreputable surroundings into which he had fallen.

But the old soldier of the First Empire, with his wooden leg and precious volume of Malthus, did not here terminate his extraordinary experiences as the solitary witness of mysterious murders. For several years he disappeared from the notice of the police, but modestly presented himself again in 1836. On August 15th of that year an English family named Stuart arrived at Godesburg, a small town on the Rhine, and took up their abode at the principal hotel of the place. They were accompanied by a Prussian valet and an English maid. There had been a mutual promise of marriage between the latter, but the engagement had been broken off, in consequence of the dissatisfaction on the part of the young woman with the character of her lover. On the evening of their arrival the two left the hotel together for a walk along the road that led to Rolandseck. The valet returned alone at ten o'clock, looking very pale. When interrogated concerning his companion by members of the Stuart family, he disclaimed any knowledge of her whereabouts. The alarm and distress of her employers was extreme, and they were greatly horrified when, on the next morning, her corpse was found at the foot of an apple tree standing on the high road, with a

bullet wound in the right side. That the motive of the unknown assassin was not robbery was shown by the fact that several articles of jewelry and a little money was found upon her person. As a matter of course, the valet was arrested and arraigned before a magistrate, charged with the murder. His story appeared utterly preposterous. In substance it was that Jane Simpson, the maid, had urged him to throw stones into the fruit trees on the road-side, notwithstanding the fact that he had assured her that the apples were totally unfit to eat. She continued to beg him, and, complying with her request, he finally looked about for stones which he might throw into the trees, and while thus engaged, at some little distance from his sweetheart, he heard a shot which seemed to have been fired from the field beyond the trees, and the unfortunate maid fell to the ground with a shriek. He said that he perceived that his situation was a very compromising one, and he was apprehensive that he would be accused of her murder. Accordingly, he made the best of his way back to the inn and denied any knowledge of the girl's fate. This tale was not believed, and, indeed, appearances were strongly against him; he was tried, found guilty, and executed at Cologne.

This succession of tragic events so seriously affected Mrs. Stuart's nervous system that her physician advised a delay of a few days at Godesburg. By September 3rd she began to convalesce, and was persuaded by her husband to take a short drive through the surrounding country. On reaching a wooded eminence, on the road leading to Rolandseck, the carriage was halted and the occupants alighted. Mrs. Stuart, not feeling equal to the exertion of climbing the hill, remained reclining on the ground in company with a German maid whom she had hired to take the place of the English maid who had been murdered. Mr. Stuart, accompanied by a favorite dog, ascended the hill. Having reached the top, he passed under a ruined arch, covered by a dense growth of shrubbery and vines, and from which an extensive view of the charming scenery peculiar to that part of Germany could be had. While thus engaged, the report of a firearm of some

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sort from the woods beneath, followed by a cry, startled him. The recent tragic death of Jane Simpson at once occurred to his mind, and, filled with alarm, he hurried down the hill, preceded by his dog. Here he found his wife sitting where he had left her; she had fainted, but was recovering. One side of her bonnet had been cut away by the shot and the maid had been wounded in the arm. Mr. Stuart, with his son and some of the people of the neighborhood, at once proceeded to search the woods and bushes in all directions. The instinct of the dog, however, was keener than that of the men; he made a sudden dart into the corner of the thicket, and began barking loudly at something which he seemed to have discovered there.

Arriving upon the scene, Mr. Stuart found an old man seated upon the ground under a tree, intently engaged in reading a book. It was none other than Armande Geraud, the hero of Austerlitz and the protégé of Marshal Soult, who, after eight years retirement from active service as a witness in mysterious cases of assassination, had suddenly reappeared upon the scene of action. So far from being perturbed at the interruption of his literary pursuits, he placed a twig in his book to mark a striking passage of the unique statistician, Malthus, and, with a smile that would have done credit to a Socrates, looked up inquiringly at the dog and his human companions. When asked if he had seen anybody pass he glanced at the closed volume and smilingly shook his head, as if to indicate that such a thing was altogether out of the question while perusing such an absorbing book. Satisfied that he could gain no information of value from the old man, Mr. Stuart was about to hurry away to search other portions of the wood, when a peculiar expression of mingled triumph and satisfaction upon the cripple's face attracted his attention, and he decided to ask him to accompany him to the town. He followed without the smallest objection, and with as much alacrity as his wooden leg permitted. The details of the affair being communicated to the police, the old man was placed under arrest.

The suspected individual said that his name was Gottlieb

Rinhalter, and that he had served through the campaigns of 1812 and 1813, having lost his leg in the battle of Leipsic. To prove his assertions, he showed a paper certifying to the fact, bearing the signature of an inferior officer who had long since died. Being asked what were his means of support, he answered that he maintained himself by rendering services as an accountant and a calculator. Being examined, he showed that he could write well and possessed some knowledge of figures, besides having an ingenious method of calculation, which he had taught himself. From the character of the book which he carried, the magistrate noted that he evidently took a decided interest in the statistical estimates with which it abounded, its dog-eared and dirty condition showing how long and how closely it had been studied. No weapons were found upon him, and as his account of himself was most satisfactory, he was discharged.

For the ensuing two years the maimed old soldier seems to have confined his attention to the arguments and statistics of Malthus, relieving them, it may be, by dipping into the pages of those anonymous authors who carried his theories forward to their legitimate conclusions. At any rate, no mention of him is discovered in the criminal annals of France from the time of his discharge by the authorities at Godesburg until the month of March, 1838, when he again presented himself to the attention of the police.

One evening in that month, a man was noticed striding hurriedly along the principal street of the ancient city of Wittenberg, in Prussian Saxony—a city made famous for all time as the cradle of the great Protestant Reformation. His appearance and bearing were well calculated to attract the attention and cause him to be remembered. He was of heavy build, wore a blouse and a cap stuck well back upon his head. This personage attracted further attention by constantly glancing about, as if fearful of being observed and followed.

Just as the clock in the tower of the old university where Martin Luther held a professorship, struck nine, the mysterious personage, unknown to the honest burghers, disappeared from view.

Along the bank of the Elbe at Wittenberg there is an ancient dyke, and on the top of this he was seen walking alone an hour later. Presently he was joined by another stout man, attired much like himself, with whom he stood for some time engaged, apparently, in earnest conversation. At the expiration of something like half an hour, they were joined by a third party. The new-comer bore a marked contrast to his two companions. He was tall, his lank form being enveloped in a long dark cloak, and wore a high, pointed, broad-brimmed hat. People who were observing them judged from the frequency and vehemency of their gesticulations, that a conference of decided importance was being carried on. The curiosity of several of the townspeople was not satisfied until they separated at midnight, each going in a different direction.

The following morning the town fair opened, and all the hotels were busily preparing for the reception of expected guests. In a back room of one of the coffee-houses, three men were sitting talking earnestly together. Two of them were the mysterious individuals in blouses who had been seen together on the dyke the night before, their tall companion—still wearing his enormous cloak and pointed hat—standing outside the window, but near enough to hear whatever was said inside. Suddenly one of the men rose, walked to the casement, and then left the room, whereupon the tall stranger moved hastily away. Almost simultaneously a shot was heard in the apartment, and when the crowd of excited men rushed through the door they were horrified to find that one of the men had received a bullet wound through his body. His companion, too startled to speak, pointed to the open window. Thereupon some of the crowd hurried to the street, where they saw a tall man covered with a cloak walking rapidly away. He was followed and taken in charge by the police. Concealed under his waistcoat, hung through one of his braces, was found a pistol. It was soon learned that he was a Tyrolesian huckster who peddled handkerchiefs, scarfs, table-cloths and other goods made from cotton and woolen fabrics. He loudly protested his innocence of any attempt upon the life of Gustav Grimm, which was the name of the

murdered man, and invoked the entire calendar of blessed saints to witness that he had never even conceived of a deed so awful. As to the pistol which had been found upon him, he told that he had purchased it at the suggestion of one Gottlieb Rinhalter, to be used for the purpose of self-defense while traveling about the country. He had known the murdered man personally, and had transacted some business with him and Rinhalter, but had never had any misunderstanding of any sort with Grimm, nor was there any reason why he should desire his death. The pistol which was taken from him was found not to be loaded, and he said he never had it charged since it had been in his possession, a statement which the appearance of the weapon seemingly confirmed.

The only witness to the shooting was a man well advanced in years, who gave the name of Gottlieb Rinhalter. The report shows that he wore a wooden leg, but, very possibly through an oversight, makes no mention of his having been engaged in reading the book which lay upon the table before him. Notwithstanding this variation, he was none other than the gray-haired disciple of Malthus. He was at once recognized, for his face and appearance were well known at fairs and markets, where he occasionally obtained employment as an accountant and a go-between in bargains. Besides these occupations, he sometimes acted as interpreter, being able to speak both French and German fluently. He said that some one had fired the fatal shot through the open window; who, he did not know. He was subjected to a rigid verbal examination, and his person was searched but no weapon found upon him. Nevertheless, circumstances appeared to warrant detaining him in custody, although, so far as learned, there was no proof that he had been connected with the shooting, either as a principal or an accomplice.

At this juncture of affairs, Mr. Stuart and his family arrived at Wittenberg, and the gentleman immediately applied for permission to see Rinhalter, whom he at once identified. This confirmed the suspicions of the police, who had been busily inventing all sorts of theories and making no end of investigations, but without success. Rinhalter was subjected

to a further and more rigorous examination, but nothing positively incriminating was discovered. It is likely that he would have been ultimately released had it not been for the fact that Gustav Grimm did not die immediately. He lingered for several days, and just before his death rallied sufficiently to make an ante-mortem statement, and to identify his murderer. The story was strange in the extreme. Left alone with Gottlieb Rinhalter in the room, they sat beside each other with a chair between them. Soon after the departure of their companion, one Nicholas Holst, the cripple slowly raised his wooden leg, and laid it horizontally across the chair which stood between Grimm and himself. As his victim looked into the assassin's face, he said he observed it was lit up by a strange smile. The next moment came a report and a bullet entered Grimm's body. Then Gottlieb instantly lowered his wooden leg, but not before the wounded man had perceived a smoke curling from its stump.

Rinhalter was now searched for the third time and the mystery clearly explained. His wooden leg contained a long pistol-barrel, and attached to it was a trigger that might be worked by means of a string which passed from it into his right-hand pocket. This contrivance had enabled him, as he afterwards coolly explained, to rest his combination false-leg and horse-pistol in a horizontal position and take deliberate and quite accurate aim, without attracting the slightest attention. He could discharge the improvised weapon without taking his hand from his pocket, and had thus been able to maintain the secret of his masked battery. It seems almost impossible that he could have been several times searched without his clumsy contrivance being discovered, yet the fact is very clearly established. It furnishes rather a severe commentary on the efficiency of the French and German police in the early part of this century. And yet we must not be too severe upon foreign methods, since one noted American burglar carried a whole kit of tools concealed in his wooden leg, and is said to have escaped from prison by their use.

The long list of murders and attempted murders which had been wrapped in most profound mystery was fully explained

by this discovery. During the progress of his trial the story of his life was brought out, down to minute details. Many of the facts he supplied himself, and that with as much self-possession as if he had been recounting a career of usefulness and honor. He had been born at Tours, France, and his real name was Raoul Croc. His father had been a Frenchman and his mother a native of Germany. The former was a barber, and the latter a rope dancer; and he, himself, had early begun to lead a roving life. The amputation of his leg had been rendered necessary by the bite of a dog, and he had never received any pension from the government, nor had he ever been a soldier.

At first the authorities were inclined to consider him insane, as no possible motive for his crimes could be conjectured. But they were not to remain long of this opinion. Once satisfied that his conviction and execution were certain, his reserved manner disappeared, and he talked freely, volubly even, and made clear the motive that had led him into a systematic course of crime. In doing this he betrayed not the slightest suggestion of remorse; on the contrary, his great regret was that he had accomplished so little in the way of taking human life. He expressed sorrow, however, for the pain he had inflicted on those individuals that he had failed to kill outright, and for the grief of the relatives of those he had slain. His criminal career had begun shortly after he had come into possession of the great work of Malthus on "Over-population," which had ever since been his bosom companion. "It showed me the true work of my life," he declared. "It came upon me like the flash of a flint in the night, or as the light that dazzled Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus." He styled himself, "The apostle of a great principle; the martyr of a practical philanthropy." Vulgar minds, who judge everything from their own narrow, everyday standpoint, might denounce him and even call him mad, but, he assured the court, he was confident that the better intellects of France, Germany, and England would do ample justice to his memory. To all appearances he spoke candidly, and appeared to consider himself as a benefactor to mankind.

As to his mysterious meeting with the murdered Grimm and the Tyrolesian huckster upon the dyke at Wittenberg, Croc offered no explanation; yet, in view of his previous crimes and the diabolical cunning of his character, the plot he had devised becomes apparent. The huckster, who dressed in an extravagant fashion, and was, no doubt, of an imaginative turn of mind, was made to believe that a person of his distinguished appearance ran great risks in traveling about the country unarmed, and easily induced to purchase a pistol. He had probably made this person believe that Grimm was disposed to turn traitor to some scheme they had concocted on the dyke, and arranged to have him play the spy the following day, with the expectation that the tall huckster would be convicted and executed for the murder; thus cutting down the hated "over-population" by two, instead of one, as was his usual custom.

The first victim to the cause of reducing the world's population was an old soldier named Armande Geraud, who had lost a leg at Austerlitz and received a pension from Marshal Soult. Geraud had announced his intention of marrying, and this had decided Croc to take his life. While Geraud and he sat smoking together in a little garden, the deed had been committed with a bludgeon. The assassin declared that at the time of the killing it had not occurred to him to impersonate his victim and draw the pension from Marshal Soult; but turning the matter over in his mind and considering it in the light of a principle of action which he had determined to make the guiding rule of his life, he came, as he said, "to see the finger of Providence pointing for his good and that of mankind." The idea seemed to him to be an inspiration, and he had subsequently passed as Armande Geraud, and had received his victim's pension from the agent of Marshal Soult. From this hour he had striven to rectify the evils of over-population so clearly shown in the "divine book" which he carried at his breast, the beneficent production of the great Englishman, Malthus. Once, indeed, he had suffered a qualm of doubt for several days, and passed many sleepless nights in consequence of some friend having sent him the roe of a herring wrapped

in a multiplication table; but he soon came to perceive that the divinely inspired author of "Over-population" must, eventually, in the course of long ages, be right, and all the produce of the sea, as well as of the land, be eaten up by the over-populated world. Henceforth he went on his way rejoicing, ever mindful of his high mission, ever coming in with his population-check upon all good opportunities.

He confessed that in the prosecution of his peculiar system of philanthropy he had directly killed twenty-seven individuals, caused the execution of five others who had been found guilty of his murders, and wounded fourteen more, most of whom, much to his regret, had recovered. He had discharged a high duty, he maintained. He had chosen the name of "Gottlieb Rinhalter"—"Love God, The Checker," to express a due sense of his high calling. Some of Croc's ideas about men and society are worthy of mention. For Fieschi, and other regicides, he expressed supreme contempt. They were, he said, nothing better than ignorant egotists. He agreed with Malthus that vice and misery had been the greatest benefactors of the race; things which he thought had done more than any other agency in reducing the population. Next to those, he regarded Bonaparte and the Duke of Wellington as the most distinguished philanthropists of history, because of their reducing the population, even though not upon any philosophic principle. Of Mr. Pitt, he spoke in terms of highest praise. He was a great man, a prime mover in the prevention of over-population. Next to the book of Malthus, Croc regarded the German work entitled "Documentary Exposition of Remarkable Crimes," by Anselm Von Feurbach, Knight, State Councillor, and President of the Court of Appeals. Only authors of the keenest intellect, he thought, could do justice to the memory of great criminals. The mass of mankind do not regard them from a philosophic standpoint. Posterity would, he thought, recognize them as philanthropists. Simon Stigler, a murderer of the century preceding, he mentioned in terms of respect, although discriminating against what he conceived to have been certain weak points in his character. Margaret Swanziger, an expert

poisoner through the use of oxalic acid mixed with negus and sugar of lead, he particularly admired. With the story of Solomon Scales, the wife murderer, he was thoroughly familiar. Jacob Solly, who had a habit of killing soldiers while standing solitary on sentry, and Thomas Pig of Hertfordshire, who had with his own hands killed nine infants, he considered ideal heroes. He was familiar with the story of Nadir Slat, who had erected pyramids and columns out of human skulls, and he dwelt with peculiar interest on the principle involved in the eighty thousand executions of Henry VIII.

These men, he said, were all great benefactors of the human race. They were superb apostles of the Malthusian doctrine, and they furnished the only effective checks and remedies that could be found. Regulation and colonization were mere temporizing. There was no remedy for it but to kill people.

The day before he was to be executed Croc asked that a poor woman, a dressmaker who had befriended him, might be permitted to visit him in one of the apartments of the jail, and that he might be granted a short conversation in private. Strange to say, with the same inattentive ignorance which the police had manifested upon the occasion of his search made after the murder of Grimm, the permission was given. Shortly after her departure he became restless, but this circumstance was attributed to the natural nervousness which might be expected in a man awaiting execution. In the evening the dressmaker returned, and once more the two were left alone together. During the night he expressed the wish that the Chief Magistrate of Wittenberg and the Head Professor of the University should breakfast with him in the morning. It is hardly necessary to say that the proffer was declined.

While Croc was being bound to the fatal chair, his eyes nervously wandered about, until they rested upon the dressmaker, whom he particularly enjoined to be present in order that she might witness his death. With a complacent smile he placed his right leg across his left knee until it pointed, as

nearly as he was able to aim, at the heart of the dressmaker. Just as the executioner arrived behind him with the two-edged sword, Croc closed his left eye and, giving a short jerk to his right elbow, fell backward. An explosion followed. Fortunately for herself, the dressmaker was uninjured. The pistol leg had been overcharged, and had burst and blown the body of the wretch into fragments.

An explanation is almost unnecessary. Croc had induced the dressmaker to bring him half a pound of gunpowder, that he might be enabled to cheat the executioner by committing suicide. He had placed the entire contents of the package in the pistol barrel. Failing in his scheme to take the lives of the two prominent men, he had determined to murder his misguided benefactress, but succeeded only in terminating his own depraved existence.

The story of Raoul Croc has been given in considerable detail because it furnishes an admirable instance of the operation of the disposition, or in this case, more properly, passion, for taking human life. It does not appear that the murderer was of a cruel or revengeful disposition, and all his manifold crimes must be chargeable to the homicidal impulse, which had gained absolute mastery over all the better promptings of his heart. For a long time he successfully resisted the temptation, but the work of Malthus presented a line of argument that quieted, or rather subdued, whatever of real conscience he possessed, and enabled him, in a manner at least, to justify his dark and cruel deeds unto himself. Judging from the boastful manner of his confession and his death, coupled with the incessant study of his "bosom companion," he probably believed the theories of Malthus and decided to carry them much farther than was contemplated by the clerical author. At the same time, the disposition to kill was the real incentive that drew, or drove, him into a course of crime almost unequaled in modern times.

CHAPTER IV

MOTIVES FOR HOMICIDE—REVENGE—NUMEROUS CASES

It is not the author's intention to present anything like a complete history of homicide; such a work would far transcend the limits he has set himself, and besides, would hardly prove of interest to the general reader. His object is, rather, to show the extent to which it has prevailed in different ages, how it has been regarded and treated by the law and by society, the efforts that have been made to repress it, the various motives that lead to its commission, with appropriate illustrations of each, and the modes of punishment adopted by various nations in different ages.

Logically considered, such a book ought to begin with the earliest historical times and descend chronologically to the present day. Such an arrangement would, however, render it impossible to treat separately and distinctly the different passions and impulses that have led to the commission of the great homicides of the world, and would render the work less interesting and instructive. In departing from the usual mode and treating the subject from the standpoint of motives rather than time, nothing is really lost, since, unlike the arts, sciences, letters, religion and civilization itself, even, homicide has been essentially the same in all ages, and is bound to continue so, for the reason that once modified it ceases to be homicide.

To set forth in a categorical way the different motives of the human heart, which, given free rein, drive one on to take the life of his fellow, is an extremely difficult task, for the reason that natural impulses are manifold and that many of them, commendable in themselves, become perverted and form combinations so various that their enumeration is impos-

sible. It must be remembered that good and evil are relative terms, and depend for their meaning upon the education and conscience of the individual who employs them. Probably no two philosophers ever exactly agreed as to the ultimate causes of crime, and the author does not essay to answer questions that have been mooted for all time. Besides, few homicides have resulted from the operation of one single and unaided passion or motive. There is usually a leading cause, but it is often mingled, frequently obscured, by others. Thus, in the mind of a murderer, many inducements, some of them perhaps excusable, are often strangely jumbled together and mixed up with dark and evil passions.

Of the passions and motives that most frequently call into activity the homicidal impulse and lead to murder, the following may safely be enumerated: Revenge, Cupidity, Jealousy, Envy, Anger, Lust, Drunkenness and Fear. To these might be added Patriotism and the Obligation of a Secret Oath. Brief as is this list, it has amply sufficed to bring to an untimely end a large proportion of all born into the world, and to reflect suffering, shame and death upon an almost infinite number of others. As has been already suggested, none of these motives are new; all are as old as the existence of sinful man. Anger and envy caused Cain to slay his brother; lust induced David to put Uriah in the front rank of battle; revenge led Samson to drag down the pillars that crushed and buried his enemies and himself, while motives of mingled patriotism and fear induced the beautiful Judith to decapitate the wicked and drunken Holofernes.

Of all the passions that control the actions of men, the love of self is clearly entitled to the foremost place. Of the criminal motives we have enumerated, all have their foundation in selfishness. The love of self is deeply implanted in every human breast, and egotism may be justly termed the ruling passion of life. So far from being wrong, self-love, within reasonable limits, is clearly right. It was divinely implanted in the original human heart for the very evident purpose of furnishing man with a motive for living in the face of sorrow and pain, and for subduing the earth in spite of

droughts, floods, tornadoes and earthquakes. The love of self, in the true sense of the term, leads men upward to true nobility and causes them to eventually sacrifice self for the benefit of others. To explain this seeming paradox: a selfish man, in the conventional and mean sense of the word, passes a beggar with a frown and possibly a muttered curse, while one endowed with a true and genuine self-love pauses and divides his few coins with the mendicant. The first refuses his contribution because to part with his money would cause him pain, while the other drops a coin, often from pure philanthropy, it is true, but more frequently for the reason that the memory of the wan face and hungry eyes of the supplicant would cost him greater suffering than the lack of the trifle he contributes.

The motive for murder that seems to contain the least element of selfishness, is revenge. Primarily, a real or supposed personal injury lies at its foundation, yet the remote cause, with all others that intervene, is absorbed by the whirlwind of passion that results—as the serpent of Aaron swallowed up those of the Egyptian enchanters. In almost all other moving causes of crime the perpetrator expects to reap some kind of substantial benefit, as wealth or the gratification of his passions, but in revenge he only expects to profit through a fiendish delight in the death or discomfiture of his enemy. The desire for revenge, accompanied as it always is with indignation and anger, often overrides conscience and all notions of common prudence, and furnishes some sort of palliation for resulting crime. On the other hand, revenge is one of the most brutish of all human impulses, and no just reason can be urged for its indulgence. As a motive of homicide, revenge is exceedingly fruitful, and, even where it is not the leading impulse, enters into combinations with others, and can be detected in a large proportion of the most atrocious instances of homicide.

Revenge has furnished the theme for almost no end of poems, dramas and novels, and much of decided value to the investigator of homicide can be gleaned from the works of master minds whose writings, even when not strictly founded

on fact, are truthful, in that they epitomize the criminal experiences of generations of wrong-doers. Among the essayists and criminal writers of the first half of the present century, few have equaled and none have surpassed Thomas De Quincey. This is especially true of his analysis of human nature. Although he led a most uneventful life, and was of a retiring disposition, his great learning and logical mind enabled him to look into the very depths of the human heart and describe the processes that lead one into courses of crime. The details of homicide appear to have had for him a weird sort of fascination. No writer of modern times portrays murder in more vivid, yet truthful, colors.

The history of Maximilian Wyndham, in his wonderful book, "The Avenger," is an admirable instance of the operation of revenge, long sustained, deliberately planned and artistically executed—for there is an art in crime, ghastly and repulsive, but none the less art, as De Quincey himself has amply demonstrated. The vengeance Wyndham wreaked, after long years of waiting, upon those who had cruelly wronged his family, suggests Byron's bitter lines:

> "Time at last makes all things even;
> If we but await the hour,
> There never yet was human power
> That could evade, if unforgiven,
> The patient watch and vigil long
> Of him who treasures up a wrong."

The narrative of the remarkable and wholesale vengeance of Maximilian Wyndham is supposed to be told by a professor in a minor university in northeastern Germany, some twenty years after the occurrence of the last events in the series of fearful tragedies. In 1815, not long after the final defeat of the French at Waterloo, this professor received a letter from a Russian nobleman asking him to receive into his family as a student, a young gentleman who stood high in the favor of the Czar, and who was possessed of a large fortune. This young man, Maximilian Wyndham by name, was the son of a distinguished officer, by birth an Italian, but claiming descent from a noble English family. As a result of the revolution in

France, the elder Wyndham's property, which was of vast extent, passed under French domination, and he entered the military service of that country. Earlier in life he had served with considerable distinction in the armies of several princes, and while holding a brigadier-general's commission in the Austrian service, had met and married a beautiful and highly accomplished Jewish lady, who traced her descent to the Maccabees and to the royal houses of Judea.

Wyndham, thanks to his wealth, secured the place of a commissary to the French forces in Italy. Through this position he succeeded in collecting several large claims due him from some of the Italian States, remitting the money to England for investment. This circumstance, becoming known to his brother officers, raised a violent prejudice against him, since it indicated his intention to retire, a little later, to that country which the French so cordially hated. In the meantime, his beautiful wife had attracted the attention of several French officers, who had annoyed and positively insulted her with their attentions. Owing to his position, Wyndham was unable to properly resent and punish the indecent proposals of his superiors, who had now become his deadly enemies. Still, his eye and bearing was sufficient warning to hold them in check, which still further inflamed their hatred. Soon the army was ordered to Germany. Wyndham well knew that under the outrageous laws and usages that still prevailed in portions of that country, his enemies would be able to persecute him in a manner that would not be tolerated, either in France or Italy. Accordingly, he attempted to resign his position as commissary, but was unable to obtain the favor, and was obliged to depart with the army. He left his wife, his son Maximilian and his two daughters in Venice. Although the boy was but twelve years of age, his father, thanks to former services, had secured him an appointment in the imperial service of Austria, with a high commission for one of his extreme youth. Upon his father's departure from Italy, Maximilian had necessarily been recalled to remain with his mother and sisters.

In a university town of Germany, Wyndham was caught in

a snare that his enemies had artfully laid for him. This was some breach of discipline, which, though really trivial, was fearfully punished. He was thrown into prison, where he was most inhumanly treated by the local jailer. The charges were so magnified that it appeared very possible the penalty might be death. In despair he begged, as a favor, that his enemies would send for his wife and children. This was exactly what they most desired, and the request was readily granted. Arriving, they found themselves classed as Jews, then generally despised and hated in Germany, and were treated in the most arbitrary manner. They found the object of their solicitude almost at the point of death, so inhumanly had he been treated. Soon after their arrival he expired. The opportunity of the French officers had now come, and they took a fearful revenge upon the woman who had spurned their dishonorable advances.

Driven to desperation, Mrs. Wyndham, publicly and in court, denounced the corrupt magistracy, taxing some of them with having made her the vilest proposals. She told them that they had been responsible for her husband's death and charged them with being in collusion with the French military oppressors of the district. For this she was arrested, charged with some form of petty treason, and sentenced to be flogged upon her bare back through the streets at noon. This punishment was to be inflicted on two separate days, professedly to relieve her torture, but really to add to her degradation. In three days this dreadful sentence was to be carried into effect.

Maximilian spent the time endeavoring to secure his mother's pardon, offering to undergo the punishment ten times in her stead, but all to no purpose. As a result of the fearful scourging and the shame that accompanied it, the unfortunate lady soon died. On the heels of this Maximilian was ordered to repair to Vienna. This had been done through a friendly French officer who reported the affair to an Austrian officer. Unfortunately, the order did not include his two sisters, whom he was obliged to leave behind him in charge of a faithful servant. It was seven months before he received a leave of

absence permitting him to return. He found his two sisters and the servant all dead. The eldest of the two girls had attracted the eye of the infamous jailer whose inhuman treatment had deprived her father of his life, and she had died in this villain's custody—what more horrible can be imagined!—while grief had cause her younger sister to soon follow her to a better world.

The day his mother was flogged through the streets, Maximilian, as appears from a paper written by him, but not opened until after his death, had sworn a fearful vengeance against all who had a hand in her degrading punishment. These vows he repeated after learning of the sad fate of his sisters, and consecrated his life to revenge.

This was the young man who became an inmate of the German professor's home, and it was in this university town that all the members of his family had perished the most miserable of deaths. The reader need not be informed that his real mission was revenge, rather than the pursuit of knowledge. In the ten years that had elapsed since the death of his parents and sisters, he had seen much of military service, and had risen to considerable distinction. He had some time before transferred his services to Russia. Arriving at the university, young Wyndham was warmly welcomed; he had paid liberally in advance for all favors he was to receive, and wealth and generosity open almost all earthly doors. Besides, he was strikingly handsome, and rose at once to a high position in the society of the quaint old town.

Maximilian well knew every one who had had aught to do with the persecution of his mother, and he had marked them all, including their families, for death. About two months after his arrival the first blow was struck; a man named Weishaupt, his wife and his two maiden sisters, together with a domestic, were found brutally murdered. This occurrence threw the town into a perfect fever of excitement. All sorts of investigations were made, which developed nothing, except that robbery had not been the motive for the crime. Three weeks later another blow was struck, an entire family being murdered in their own house.

Young Wyndham now suggested the organization of a band of students to act as a street patrol to protect the town at night, and he became an active member himself. But still the murders went on, the authorities being unable to obtain the smallest clue to the identity of the perpetrators. As a matter of fact they were the work of a band that the young student had organized for that very purpose. In the midst of horrid wars, Maximilian had been obliged to postpone his deeply-cherished revenge, but at length he developed a plan and found the means of carrying it into effect. He says in the statement already referred to: "A voice ascended to me day and night, from the graves of my father and mother, calling for vengeance before it should be too late. I took my measures thus: Many Jews were present at Waterloo. From amongst these, all irritated against Napoleon for the expectations he had raised, only to disappoint by his great assembly of Jews at Paris, I selected eight, whom I knew familiarly as men hardened by military experience against the movements of pity. With these as my beagles, I hunted for some time in your forest before opening my regular campaign; and I am surprised that you did not hear of the death which met the executioner—him I mean who dared lift his hand against my mother. This man I met by accident in the forest; and I slew him. I talked with the wretch, as a stranger at first, upon the memorable case of the Jewish lady. Had he repented, had he expressed compunction, I might have relented. But far otherwise; the dog, not dreaming to whom he spoke, exulted; he—but why repeat the villain's words? I cut him to pieces. Next, I did this: My agents I caused to matriculate separately at the college. They assumed the college dress. And now mark the solution of that mystery which caused such perplexity. Simply as students we all had an unsuspected admission at any house. Just then there was a common practice, as you will remember, amongst the younger students, of going out a-masking—that is, of entering houses in the academic dress, and with the face masked. This practice subsisted even during the most intense alarm from the murderers; for the dress of the students was supposed to

bring protection along with it. But, even after suspicion had connected itself with this dress, it was sufficient that I should appear unmasked at the head of the maskers to insure them a friendly reception. Hence the facility with which death was inflicted, and that unaccountable absence of alarms at the time the crimes were committed. I took hold of my victim, and he looked at me with smiling security. Our weapons were hid under our academic robes; and even when we drew them out, and at the moment of applying them to the throat, they still supposed our gestures to be part of the pantomime we were performing. Did I relish this abuse of personal confidence in myself? No—I loathed it, and I grieved for its necessity; but my mother, a phantom not seen with bodily eyes, but ever present to my mind, continually ascended before me; and still I shouted aloud to my astounded victim, 'This comes from the Jewess! Hound of hounds! Do you remember the Jewess whom you dishonored, and the oaths which you broke in order that you might dishonor her, and the righteous law which you violated, and the cry of anguish from her son which you scoffed at?' Who I was, what I avenged, and whom, I made every man aware, and every woman, before I punished them. The details of the cases I need not repeat. One or two I was obliged, at the beginning, to commit to my Jews. The suspicion was thus, from the first, turned aside by the notoriety of my presence elsewhere; but I took care that none suffered who had not either been upon the guilty list of magistrates who condemned the mother, or of those who turned away with mockery from the supplication of the son."

The jailer received the worst fate of all. He had been made a police officer since the death of the Wyndhams, and disappeared suddenly during the summer of 1816, nor could any trace of him be found. In November of that year, the leaves having fallen in the forest, his body was found nailed to a tree, which bore this savage inscription: "T. H., jailer at ——; crucified July 1, 1816." Touching this matter, Maximilian wrote as follows: "As to the jailer, he was met by a party of us. Not suspecting that any of us could be connected

with the family, he was led to talk of the most hideous details with regard to my poor Berenice. The child had not, as had been insinuated, aided her own degradation, but had nobly sustained the dignity of her sex and her family. Such advantages as the monster pretended to have gained over her —sick, desolate, and latterly delirious—were, by his own confession, not obtained without violence. This was too much. Forty thousand lives, had he possessed them, could not have gratified my thirst for revenge. Yet, had be but shown courage, he should have died the death of a soldier. But the wretch showed cowardice the most abject, and—but you know his fate."

A cloud, which, though silver-lined, threatened to obscure the fiery hate of the young officer and cause him to abandon his deep-laid plan for revenge, rose athwart his path. There is an old proverb to the effect that the unexpected generally happens. Probably no one could have convinced Maximilian, in advance of the event, that he was destined to fall in love—yet such was the result of his becoming domiciled at the university. More than that, he fell violently in love with the granddaughter of one of the magistrates, towards whom he entertained the deepest animosity. His affection was returned, and he became a suitor for her hand. The grandfather violently opposed the union, but the young man persisted in his suit. After some months the old gentleman suddenly changed his ground, and evinced willingness, anxiety even, that the couple should be speedily married, a proceeding that caused no end of speculation among the worthy gossips of the town. In the meantime the couple had been secretly, though legally, married, of which occurrence the grandfather did not entertain the slightest suspicion.

And now a condition arose that fairly wrung the heart of the Avenger. His wife's grandfather had been marked for slaughter. Maximilian attempted to defeat this end, but one of the band of assassins to whom circumstances had given momentary power, and whose heart was bitter against the old man, insisted that the programme be carried out to its legitimate denouement—the death of the last remaining offender.

Wyndham yielded, but stipulated that the murder should be committed at a time when the young lady was expected to be absent on a visit. Again the unexpected happened; something prevented the anticipated visit, and she descended the stairs just in time to see her husband in the act of seizing her grandfather. The result was absolutely appalling; the old man was slain, and the young wife, who was in a delicate condition, died as a result of the fearful shock. Maximilian's object in contracting a secret marriage was to humiliate the grandfather. Of this he wrote: "Let me add, that the sole purpose of my clandestine marriage was to sting her grandfather's mind with the belief that his family had been dishonored, even as he had dishonored mine. He learned, as I took care he should, that his granddaughter carried about with her the promises of a mother, and did not know that she had the sanction of a wife. This discovery made him, in one day, become eager for the marriage he had previously opposed; and this discovery also embittered the misery of his death."

Even now the police did not discover the perpetrators of the numerous crimes. The secret was revealed by the Avenger himself. After the funeral of his wife he entrusted his friend, the professor, with two sealed documents; one his will, the other his dying statement, the latter of which was not to be made public for at least three years. This done, he died from the effects of self-administered poison.

To understand something of the mental condition of Wyndham and appreciate the provocation that urged him on to his deep revenge, even at the expense of his own life and that of one to whom he was absolutely devoted, and also to show that hate is a stronger passion than love, one more passage from his remarkable confession may be quoted. It refers to his mother's scourging and his own vow of vengeance: "The day came; I saw my mother half undressed by the base officials; I heard the prison gates expand; I heard the trumpets of the magistracy sound. She had warned me what to do; I had warned myself. Would I sacrifice a retribution sacred and comprehensive for the momentary triumph over an individual? If not, let me forbear to look out of doors; for I

felt that in the self-same moment in which I saw the dog of an executioner raise his accursed hand against my mother swifter than lightning would my dagger search his heart. When I heard the roar of the cruel mob, I paused—endured—forbore. I stole out by by-lanes of the city, from my poor exhausted sisters, whom I left sleeping in each other's innocent arms, into the forest. There I listened to the shouting populace; there even I fancied I could trace my poor mother's route by the course of the triumphant cries. There, even then, even then, I made—O, silent forest! thou heardst me when I made —a vow that I have kept too faithfully. Mother, thou art avenged; sleep, daughter of Jerusalem! for at length the oppressor sleeps with thee. And thy poor son has paid, in discharge of his vow, the forfeit of his own happiness, of a paradise opening upon earth, of a heart as innocent as thine, and a face as fair."

In this narrative the homicidal impulse is seemingly present, although the moving cause was revenge. To a certain extent, also, the secret and solemn oath of Wyndham must be reckoned as having had its influence. It was uttered at a moment when he was suffering tortures from the terrible indignities to which his mother was being subjected, and would be certain to make upon the young man an impression so profound as to be quite as enduring as the memory of the original wrong. Thus, the solemn obligations of religion itself were made to fortify the decidedly wicked passion of revenge.

In reading this wonderful work of De Quincey, the sympathy of many readers is constantly with the deeply wronged, misguided young man. This does not indicate any sympathy with homicide, but rather a deep detestation of the cruel and unwarrantable acts of those who were made to suffer in turn. This feeling of sympathy is a form, greatly modified it is true, but still a manifestation of the passion we term revenge. The outrageous treatment of Maximilian's mother arouses within us a feeling of deep indignation; in a certain sense we make the cause of the young man our own, and ardently desire to see his enemies punished. This sympathy, not with crime,

but with retribution, has been universally recognized by the authors of all ages, from Chaucer to Dickens, who have, almost invariably, provided a denouement in which vice and crime meet with adequate punishment. If it were possible to carry this principle into actual life, crime would rapidly diminish. As it is, the feeling of sympathy we have noted shows a general detestation of crime that augurs well for the future. That this sentiment has developed in modern times is evident from a close scrutiny of the literature of the world. In the wonderful poems ascribed to blind Homer, tragic acts abound, but they are treated without reference to their moral aspects, those that we would now term vicious not being distinguished from others that rightly appeal to human sympathy. The popular fiction of two or three centuries ago did not, in this respect, rise to the high standard of that of the present day, as witness the works of Fielding and Smollett. Even Shakespeare did not always punish the wrong-doings of his characters.

From the professional standpoint of the author one point in the story of Maximilian Wyndham seems worthy of special mention: The denouement that cost the Avenger his wife and drove him to confession and suicide, might well have been avoided had he not been present at the last of the series of murders. In working out the plot as he did, De Quincey showed consummate skill and an intimate acquaintance with human nature. Those who have spent years in the systematic study of crime and the detection and conviction of criminals, well understand that continued immunity from arrest renders law-breakers careless, often reckless, and, through a sense of fancied security, leads them to commit acts and adopt methods that assure their ultimate detection and punishment.

One of the most noted of all the homicides of history was the killing of Francesco Cenci, a wealthy Roman nobleman, by the contrivance of his wife and children. Although this tragedy occurred at the close of the sixteenth century, it is exceedingly difficult to write an account of it that can be vouched for as absolutely reliable. Shelley made it the subject of a very powerful play, full of romantic incidents, and

this has had a large influence in forming the modern theory of the murder.

Francesco Cenci was the son of Christopher Cenci, born out of wedlock, but legitimatized under the Roman law by the subsequent marriage of his parents. He was born during the pontificate of Clement VI. From his childhood he was brutal and vicious, having, when but eleven years old, in company with his tutor, been arrested by the Roman police for assaulting and robbing a prelate, to extricate him from which difficulty his father was obliged to pay handsomely. As he grew to manhood, his passions, never curbed, grew more violent; hatred and lust ruled supreme in his soul, and he hesitated at nothing which might gratify these dominating influences. He was twice married, three children being the issue of the first union, while his second wife, a widow named Lucretia, brought him no offspring. He was cordially detested, alike by his children, and their stepmother.

Beatrice Cenci, his only daughter, is said to have been one of the handsomest women in Italy; indeed, she is still known as the "Beautiful Parricide." Her beauty seems to have excited unnatural passions in the breast of her depraved father, who is said to have accomplished her ruin. Besides this, he is accused of having hired assassins to kill his two sons. Beatrice appealed to her friends and likewise to the Pope, Clement VII., for protection and redress, but failed to receive it. Despairing of aid and constantly persecuted by her most unnatural father, she seems to have conspired with her stepmother and her brother Giacomo to put him to death. One account makes the three the executors of their own terrible sentence of death. Another version of the tragedy informs us that the conspirators hired two assassins, one of whom was the steward of Francesco Cenci, to put him to death. The assassination took place in the castle upon one of his Neapolitan estates, where he was accustomed to spend a portion of each year. The method adopted was at once unique and horrible. One of the murderers held a sharpened nail above one of the eyes of the nobleman as he lay sound asleep, while the other drove it into his brain with a blow from

a hammer. This done, the body was thrown from a window into the branches of a tree, the intention being to make it appear that he had fallen from the window and received his death-wound upon one of the many sharp points with which the tree abounded. This part of the plot miscarried; the body fell to the ground, and the murderers fled for their lives. A reward being placed upon their heads by the government of Naples, one of them was killed, while the other, being captured, made a full confession. The Cenci family were arrested, and Giacomo and Beatrice were put to the torture. Giacomo confessed, but Beatrice persisted in her innocence. They were all convicted and executed in August, 1599.

Historians are not wanting, however, who allege that Beatrice was entirely innocent of all complicity in the affair, but was the victim of an infernal plot. The result of the labors of the most recent investigator of this dark and mysterious crime, Bertolotti, are far from supporting this theory. Drawing his information largely from original documents, he says that Beatrice, at the time she murdered her father—for he concluded that she was the direct cause of his death—instead of being only sixteen years of age, as has long been asserted, was really twenty-one, and possessed of a somewhat tarnished reputation. More than that, he asserts that she was far from beautiful, and that the sweet and mournful countenance which forms one of the chief treasures of the Barberina Palace in Rome, copies of which are to be seen all over the world, is not the portrait of Beatrice, and, moreover, was not even painted by Guido, to whom it has long been unhesitatingly attributed.

Fiction generally proves more powerful than history, and, even if Bertolotti is right in his conclusions, the character of the "Beautiful Parricide," as drawn by Shelley and other romantic authors, will doubtless continue to be adopted as correct. Whatever the exact facts were, it is evident that the morals of Italy three hundred years ago were exceedingly debased, and that most encouraging advancement has been made since those evil times.

An instance of homicide of peculiar atrocity, from the

motive of revenge, occurred at Hoddesden, England, early in the present century. The perpetrator of the outrageous crimes —for his thirst for vengeance was not satisfied with one victim —was Thomas Simmons, a servant. He was the son of poor parents, and at an early age had been taken into the employment of a Mr. Boreham, of that place. He remained with this gentleman for a number of years, but at the age of nineteen was discharged on account of his brutal disposition, of which he had given a number of exhibitions. There was in the house a servant named Elizabeth Harris, a woman many years Simmons' senior, with whom he appears to have fallen violently in love. He persisted in paying her his addresses after she, upon the advice of her mistress, had declined to have anything further to say to him

Upon leaving his place, the villain vowed vengeance upon both mistress and maid, and, shortly afterward, on the 20th of October, 1807, he proceeded to carry his threats into execution. On that day there were present in the house Mr. and Mrs. Boreham, their four daughters, Elizabeth Harris and a Mrs. Hummerstone. Shortly after nine o'clock in the evening, the party in the parlor heard a loud altercation in the back part of the house, which proceeded from Simmons and Elizabeth Harris, the latter having refused him admission. The villain attempted to stab the woman by plunging a knife through the lattice window, but did not succeed in reaching her. Mrs. Hummerstone having in the meantime opened the rear door, the murderous wretch rushed in and stabbed her in the jugular vein, causing almost instant death.

Instead of being satisfied, the revengeful rage of Simmons seems only to have been stimulated by his first deed of blood. Rushing into the parlor, he brandished his bloody knife and swore that he would have the lives of all of them. His next victim was Mrs. Warner, the eldest daughter of Mr. Boreham. Before she could rise from her chair, the wretch repeatedly stabbed her in the neck and breast, causing wounds from which she almost immediately died. The other daughters escaped by running upstairs. The scoundrel then aimed a fierce blow at the jugular vein of Mrs. Boreham, but only

inflicted a severe flesh wound, which did not prove mortal. After this he made a most desperate and determined effort to slay the servant, towards whom he seemed to bear the greatest animosity, but, after being badly wounded, she succeeded in gaining the street and giving the alarm. Several people responded to her affrighted cries. Some of them turned their attention to the wounded, while the others began a search for the murderer, who was thought to be still upon the premises. After a long search he was discovered in a corn-crib in the farm-yard, and was at once apprehended. His captors bound him so tightly to prevent all chance of his escaping that the thongs stopped the circulation of his blood. He was found in the morning in an almost dying condition, but was revived by restoratives.

Mr. Boreham was a Quaker of such a pronounced type that he declined to prosecute the inhuman wretch who had murdered his daughter, Mrs. Warner. Simmons was tried at the Hertford Assizes on March 4, 1808, for the murder of Mrs. Hummerstone. Not only were the foregoing facts proved against him, but the murderer had confessed his crime to the coroner, declaring that it had been his intention to kill Mrs. Boreham, Mrs. Warner and Elizabeth Harris. Thomas Simmons was hanged on March 7, 1808, and died without manifesting the slightest indication of concern or repentance.

In this case the motive was clearly revenge. At the same time, the homicidal impulse was fully developed. There was not the slightest evidence of insanity, and we can hardly conceive of a mere boy of nineteen years planning and deliberately carrying into execution a wholesale series of murders, unless the desire to kill had been present in such force as to overcome all considerations of humanity and prudence. In Thomas Simmons, the passion to kill others was stronger than the love of his own life.

The pages of criminal history are well filled with similar cases. What we term "love"—the highest and best impulse of the human heart—often appears to turn into its antithesis, as sweet wine becomes vinegar, and develops into the most cruel and relentless hatred, accompanied by a deep-seated

desire for revenge. It may be remarked that this does not occur in truly humane people, however grievous their wrongs. Simmons was of a brutal disposition, and gave free swing to low passions. In the author's experience and observation, crimes of this class are always perpetrated by people possessing depraved natures.

Revenge is one of the deepest-seated of all human passions. In some people it seldom manifests itself, and when it does, passes away with the momentary cause that provoked it. In others, and perhaps a majority of mankind, grievances, real or imaginary, are treasured up, and the thought of vengeance constantly entertained. As a rule, however, revenge does not ordinarily take the form of murder. To deprive one of his life is, indeed, to exact the greatest possible punishment; but the revengeful heart desires to gloat over its victim, to note his sufferings and perhaps taunt and mock him. When death has stepped in, this is unattainable. Murders from the motive of revenge are very frequently to be ascribed to rage, which, though it generally subsides after a "cooling time" has intervened, is often revived by a word, a look, or some trivial circumstance, and becomes more uncontrollable than ever.

Yet feelings of revenge are often long entertained, and prove, after the lapse of years, the moving cause of homicide. One of the most striking instances of this kind occurred over a hundred years ago, in England. It was a case of matricide, one of the most detestable and unnatural crimes of which the human mind can conceive.

The details in this case are very meagre, as they rightly should be in so revolting a crime. William Farmery, a young man not yet of age, killed his mother by stabbing her in the throat with a knife. He was at once apprehended, and made full confession. He stated that his mother had punished him some three years before, and that he had then formed the determination to take her life. On the occasion of the murder she had reproved him for some trifling matter, upon which he arose and left the house. Having deliberately sharpened his knife upon a whetstone, he re-entered the house and surprised his

mother in the act of making his bed. Unmindful of the fact that she was his mother, who had always loved and cherished him, and was at that moment working for his comfort, he threw her down and took her life. He was executed August 5, 1775, and manifested neither repentance nor concern.

A worse instance than this case can hardly be found in the annals of crime. It shows an utterly depraved heart, bereft of those natural impulses that control even dumb brutes. It likewise discloses a disposition to slay, for the motive was too trifling to have induced him to commit such a heinous offense without the murderous impulse being present in his heart. In the Latimer case, detailed in Chapter VI. of this volume, a young man murdered a woman whom he firmly believed to be his mother, but a stronger motive was present. He was in financial difficulty, and needed ready money to carry on his debauches. By killing his mother he expected to secure wealth. In the present instance, the motive of cupidity did not exist. Young Farmery killed his mother for revenge and to gratify the homicidal impulse, which evidently possessed him.

A homicide surrounded with unusual circumstances, though clearly chargeable to the motive of revenge, occurred in Chicago, in the year 1869. The perpetrator of this most brutal and unprovoked crime was one Daniel Walsh, the victim being a very handsome girl named Rose Weldon. The facts in this interesting case, as given here, were recently obtained from Mr. Joseph H. Dixon, who at the time of the occurrence was chief of detectives of the city of Chicago.

Walsh came to Chicago from Buffalo, N. Y., in 1861. Soon after he went south to St. Louis, and in 1864 enlisted in the army. He was in the battle of Wilson's Creek, and was at the side of General Nathaniel Lyon when the latter was shot. At the close of the war Walsh returned to Chicago, and worked as a hack-driver and later as driver of a street-car. It was while in the latter employment that he first met Rose Weldon, whom he married and killed.

Rose was well known for her beauty. She lived on the West Side, and after leaving school worked in a millinery

store at 143 Lake Street. Her people were respectable and hard-working, and she contributed to the support of the family. The acquaintance between Walsh and the young girl soon developed to an intimacy. Walsh was a constant caller, and Rose regarded the good-looking young man's attentions with favor. When marriage was suggested, however, it met with family opposition. Walsh was unknown, and there were suspicions as to his past. Opposition only threw a dash of romance into the courting, and the two were wedded at the Church of the Holy Family, February 6, 1869. After the ceremony the couple went to the bride's home, and a few hours later the husband had deserted her without giving any cause.

After a few days Rose returned to her work at the millinery store. She saw nothing of her husband, but learned through the Buffalo police that he had deserted a wife and child in that place. Thereupon she began a suit for divorce on the ground of desertion. When the decree was granted, Walsh's employers heard of the matter, and he was discharged.

Then came the murder. Walsh believed Rose was responsible for his discharge, and, according to the evidence of the trial, threatened revenge. The day before the shooting he bought a revolver. The next day he left his boarding house on 22d Street, and went to the millinery establishment where Rose worked. When she came out he stepped from an adjacent doorway. She started to run, but he followed and urged her to listen to him, as he wished a reconciliation. As she reached the door of her father's house he drew his revolver and shot her in the side. As the girl fell her brother Dick rushed from the house and grappled with Walsh. He would have killed him if the latter had not offered to kill himself. Walsh begged for the revolver which had been wrenched from him, saying: "Don't shoot me, Dick! Give me the gun and I'll kill myself." But when he had gained his feet and been given the weapon he started on a run. He was caught by a policeman, who had been attracted by the shooting, and was walked by the latter nearly a mile to the nearest

station. All the way an angry mob had to be held at bay by the officer.

For ten days Rose Weldon lingered between life and death. During all this time her afflicted father was constantly by her side, and was not known to have either eaten or slept. He survived her but one hour, and they were buried together. Mrs. Weldon was prostrated with grief, and died of a broken heart five days before Walsh was taken to the penitentiary.

The murderer was tried in November, 1869. A clear case was made by the prosecution and no defense was offered. Walsh was promptly found guilty and sentenced to be hanged December 10, 1869.

If ever a man should have expiated his crimes upon the scaffold, that man was Daniel Walsh. He had won the affections of a mere school-girl, married her while he had a lawful wife living, deserted her almost immediately after the marriage ceremony, and deliberately taken her life because she had obtained a divorce from him. The wrong-doing was all his own, yet, because the publicity given to the affair had cost him his situation, he was seized with a devilish desire for revenge which he lost no time in satisfying. Every community abounds with sentimental people who would stand by and see a poor woman go to jail for stealing a loaf of bread for her starving children, and then exert themselves to the utmost to save from the justly-merited fate awarded by the law a self-confessed murderer. Exactly this thing happened in the present case. A number of the most prominent people of Chicago interested themselves in the cause of Walsh. Petitions asking for a reprieve were circulated and freely signed. The Governor refused to grant it; whereupon the man who had gone to the State Capitol to urge executive clemency sent the following dispatch to Chicago. "All right; I will return by next train." This was on the day fixed for the execution, and was taken to indicate that a reprieve had been granted. Extra newspapers announcing a reprieve were at once issued, and Walsh was jubilant. Hearing of this, the Governor telegraphed a reprieve of four weeks. The efforts in behalf of the condemned man were at once redoubled. The Governor

was besieged with petitions and delegations of sentimentalists, At the last moment the sentence was changed to imprisonment for life, and the brutal wife-murderer escaped the fatal noose. He died recently in the penitentiary at Joliet, where he had been a prisoner for more than a quarter of a century.

CHAPTER V

CUPIDITY—LACENAIRE—THE "THREE ITALIANS"

Of all the commandments in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not steal," is the one, probably, most frequently violated, and hence occupies a position of foremost importance. From the earliest and rudest times the right to possess and control property has been earnestly maintained. In the laws of all nations a man is justified in defending his property, even to the taking of human life. Indeed, property is often put above life. Shakespeare makes Shylock say: "You do take my life when you do take the means by which I live." This almost universal desire of possessing, or cupidity, lies at the root of a long category of crimes, beginning with trifling theft and ending with murder. And yet, the desire for wealth, when restricted to proper limits and softened and controlled by justice and humanity, so far from being culpable, is to be highly commended, for without it civilization would be an impossibility. The man who fashioned the first rude spear and fishing-hook considered them his own and fought as desperately for their possession as the modern banker would for his well-filled vaults. This deep-seated feeling or instinct has leveled forests, planted vineyards, multiplied flocks and herds, builded cities and ships, discovered new continents—in a word, subdued the earth.

It appears that those qualities of human nature from which the most valuable results are obtained are the most subject to perversion and provide the most numerous instances of sin and crime. Acquisitiveness furnishes no exception to this rule, and its unchecked career, as already suggested, is almost certain to culminate in the commission of crime. To reap where we have not sown and gather where we have not strewn; to

obtain more of this world's goods than falls as the just portion of our own labor, presupposes that we benefit by the industry and thrift of others. From what is termed "shrewdness" in driving bargains to plain and simple theft, the transition is "as easy as lying." Although a crime separate and distinct in itself, larceny can seldom be accomplished without involving the perpetrator in other and frequently more heinous offenses. Of the multitude of cases of homicide in which the author has been employed, by far the great majority—nearly all of them, in fact—have had their origin in motives of cupidity. Footpads assault and kill a man; horse-thieves shoot down the pursuing owner; burglars chloroform to death the sleeping inmates of the house they design to plunder, or deliberately slay them if they chance to become aroused; coiners and "moonshiners" shoot the meddling officers of the law. In all of these cases, and in many others of a similar character, the motive is unlawful gain, and the more awful crime of murder is merely an adjunct to the lesser one of theft. While cupidity lies at the root of this class of crimes, it is often mingled with other motives. Since the days of Duval and Robin Hood, highwaymen have often chosen their victims with reference to the satisfaction of some ancient grudge; house-breakers frequently select the residence of an officer who has arrested them, or a judge who has pronounced upon them the sentence of the law. Even the homicidal impulse is sometimes called into play, and people put to death when their lives might have been spared without diminishing the amount of booty or imperiling the safety of the "operators."

These facts, well understood by all who have had any experience with criminals, or who possess even a slight acquaintance with their methods, demonstrate the awful risks incurred by one who enters upon the slightest course of wrong-doing, such as petty pilfering. While murder frequently results from sudden impulses, and does not always presuppose a long course of lesser crimes, it is, in the observation of the author, which is abundantly sustained by the criminal annals of the world, generally the result of a series of evil acts, gradually increasing in enormity until they culminate in the

taking of human life. Without assuming the rôle of a moralist, the writer would emphasize the fact that bad always leads to worse, and that the most hardened wretch who ever paid the death-penalty on the scaffold was once an innocent, prattling child.

The instances of homicide as resulting from cupidity fairly punctuate with dark and forbidding blots the pages of history. From the earliest times human life has been cheaply held. For ages bloody wars and private ventures in the domain of homicide retarded the world's development. The actors in the awful tragedies knew nothing of the theories of Malthus, but they none the less successfully retarded the growth of the world's population, and its civilization and enlightenment. Celebrated cases illustrating this motive of homicide are so numerous that only a small proportion of them can be given, but those presented will be chosen with a view of illustrating its various phases, and at the same time showing something of the different modes adopted by criminals to carry into execution their murderous plans and plots.

Man is a social animal, and longs for the companionship of his fellows. Nor is this disposition confined to those who lead proper lives and consort with proper people. The worst of men yearn for fellowship, and are really unhappy when deprived of it.

As good men form intimate friendships and pursue laudable ends in company, so the most depraved congregate together for the purpose of having some one to confide in, with whom past successes can be discussed and gloated over, and future exploits planned; and likewise that they may the better carry their perfected schemes into execution. That some benefits accrue to scoundrels from this association, is undeniable, yet it generally happens that, in the long run, it leads to their detection. There is some force in the old phrase, "honor among thieves," but it falls far short of being universal. A thorough criminal, confronted with evidences of his guilt, will usually incriminate his accomplices, if by so doing he can save his own neck from the halter. Indeed, where he does not adopt this course, it is safe to say that he is guided by policy, not "honor."

In the year 1854 there lived in No. 271 in the Passage du Cheval, Rouge St. Martin, in the city of Paris, an impudent rascal named Chardon. He had, according to the records of the police, served a term in the prison at Poissy, from which reformatory institution he had but recently been discharged. He had been confined there for larceny, and, as is the almost universal practice of such characters, at once resumed his criminal career. During his incarceration, as is common with rogues, he seems to have perfected a new scheme, for he proceeded to represent himself as a member of a society known as the "Charity of St. Cecilia." In this guise, or, more properly, disguise, he went about the city selling devotional articles, such as rosaries, images, etc., made of cut glass, for which he was, on the plea of charity, enabled to obtain extravagant prices. His marked success so increased his self-importance and assurance that he had the audacity to petition Marie Amelie for a subscription to assist him in establishing an almshouse. More than this, so successful was his imposture, and so persuasive his representations, that he succeeded in securing from the queen a contribution of ten thousand francs and a promise of further assistance. Although Chardon was not one of the gregarious sort of thieves, but usually kept his own council, he had not been able to avoid all publicity in carrying through his negotiations with the Queen, and rumors of his newly acquired wealth were heard among the low resorts, where he was a familiar figure.

On December 17th, of the year before mentioned, about midday, two men, one tall and strongly built, the other of small stature and possessed of a very pale face, mounted the stairs of the wretched building where the impostor's apartments were located, and knocked upon the door. Receiving no answer, they began descending to the street, when, on the stairway, they met the rascal, who was without his coat, and had apparently been out on some trivial errand. Informed that the two men had called to see him on business, Chardon invited them to his rooms. No sooner had the door closed behind them than one of the visitors seized the astonished promoter of almshouses by the throat, while his companion

produced a sharpened three-cornered file and stabbed the struggling wretch repeatedly, both in the back and breast. The impostor fell to the floor, probably dead, but to make certain and at the same time secure his just share of the horrible "sport," the shorter of the two assassins seized an ax, which happened to be at hand, and put the matter beyond all question. In the meantime—and here appears an advantage of hunting human life, after the manner of hounds, in pairs—in the meantime, the taller villain entered the adjoining apartment where the mother of the murdered man lay sick in bed. Again the improvised poniard was pressed into service, and the old woman was fatally stabbed.

This bloody double murder accomplished, the two scoundrels threw a mattress over the dead woman's body and proceeded to ransack the drawers of an old bureau that stood behind the bed. In them they discovered some silver dish covers, a large fur-lined cloak, a black silk cap and five hundred francs in gold. Hastily dividing the plunder, the two "friends in crime" hurried from the premises. On the staircase they met two persons who stopped them and inquired after Chardon. The taller of the two murderers replied that they too had been looking for him, but were told that he was absent from home. He then donned the black silk cap, while his companion enveloped his form in the stolen cloak, and the two lost no time in repairing to a notorious thieves' resort, a café in the Boulevard du Temple.

It may appear strange that such minute details can be given of this most sanguinary occurrence, but it must be remembered that the police methods of Paris were in that day far in advance of those pursued in the provinces. More than that, the examining magistrates of France, even at the present day, possess powers which they freely, not to say brutally, exercise, that are altogether unknown in America or England. Instead of being regarded as innocent until proven guilty, the accused is regarded as guilty until adjudged innocent, and is examined in a manner calculated to make him incriminate himself. Thanks to accurate police records he is confronted with his past life and so badgered that he often breaks down

upon his preliminary examination and confesses everything. If the first inquiry does not prove satisfactory, he is remanded to solitary confinement, often for many days, and is re-examined as many times as may be deemed advisable. In this way, long after the occurrence, many of the gruesome details of this case were obtained.

With the stolen money and the proceeds of the silver, the two thieves, for murder with them was but a necessary incident of theft, proceeded to "make merry." In the meantime they combined business with pleasure, and concocted a plan for further profitable villainy. They were "in funds" now and proposed to do something more "respectable" than vulgar house-breaking and ordinary murder. In accordance with their determination, they procured, the very next day, three small rooms on an upper floor of a large apartment house, or "hotel," in the Rue Monteguil, where they represented themselves as law students. Their plan was to decoy bankers' clerks to their rooms, under one pretense or another, where they were to be murdered and robbed. This was to be done at a time of day when the clerks were usually entrusted with considerable sums of money; so the scheme promised large returns. The plans of the wicked seem often to prosper in this world, but in this instance a temporary back-set was experienced. Immediately after their assumption of the dignity of law students, the shorter of the two assassins was arrested by the police on some trifling charge.

His tall accomplice was not discouraged by this quite ordinary occurrence, neither does he seem to have grieved deeply for his imprisoned "friend," for he lost no time in securing another partner in the yet untried business of murdering and robbing bank-clerks. He soon found a man in the person of a tailor, named Battou. He was a tailor in a little more than name, since he only used his trade, at which he seldom worked, as a cloak for his criminal practices. He principally devoted his time to thieving and serving at the Opera Comique as a supernumerary. Battou had taken but a few degrees in the great Parisian university of crime, and the

proposal to enter into a scheme involving robbery, with the awful accompaniment of murder, was quite appalling to him. This must not be ascribed to conscience—he seemed to have had little enough of that—but he lacked the requisite courage to become a participant in anything so hazardous. He proved none the less valuable, however, for he introduced the tall assassin to a man after his own heart. This was an old soldier, named Francois, who had served in the bloody wars in Northern Africa, and who announced himself as quite ready to kill a man for a consideration of twenty francs. The two congenial spirits were not long in reaching a mutual understanding, and proceeded to at once put into execution the plan already formulated.

A few days later, on December twenty-ninth, to be exact, the tall rascal sallied forth to start into motion the plot that was to terminate in robbery and murder. He repaired to the banking house of Messrs. Mallet & Co., where he presented a draft upon one Mahossier. He requested the firm to have his bill presented to the drawer for payment, and gave his residence as being in the Rue Monteguil. It is almost unnecessary to state that the number he gave corresponded with the one where the murderous den of the two assassins was located. The trap was now set, and the bait nicely adjusted. No detail had been omitted, even the name of the imaginary debtor, Mahossier, having been carefully chalked upon the door, and an arrangement made with the concierge of the building, by which any one inquiring for Mahossier should be directed to their apartments.

Everything being now fully arranged, the tall man, who, like the wooden-legged Croc, whose career has been narrated in a preceding chapter, was of a literary turn of mind, complacently lighted his pipe and proceeded to read, not the startling figures of Malthus, but a chapter from an almost equally dangerous author, Rosseau. The old African campaigner, who was educated in nothing except crime, and lacked the cultivated taste of his companion in crime, occupied himself in tugging at his dirty red beard. This must not be attributed to nervousness—Francois was no novice in the art

of murder—but rather to impatience and a feeling that time, and hence money, was being lost.

At length the sound of a footstep fell upon the strained hearing of the listening wretch, and he nudged his companion to arouse him from the entertaining work that was engrossing his every attention. A moment later came the knock at the door for which the two plotters had been waiting, and which promised to be to them the "open sesame" to fortune. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon when Francois opened the door, and, with as near an approach to a smile as his hard face could be brought to assume, admitted a young man who announced that he had called to collect a draft from M. Mahossier. Whether the tall man doubted the nerve or ability of his accomplice or was unwilling to permit him to cut a distinguished figure in their first business venture, he did not wait for him to carry out his allotted part, but varied the agreed programme by producing the sharpened file with which he had already dispatched at least two victims, and ran the point of the improvised but none the less deadly weapon, into the breast of the unsuspecting boy. In spite of the awful wound, the victim was able to utter vigorous screams. Instead of grasping him by the throat, Francois attempted to close his mouth with his hand. With a blow of his elbow the struggling clerk sent him staggering back and redoubled his outcries. Something of a panic now possessed the would-be assassins, who made ready to quit the apartment, but not until they had relieved the wounded messenger of the bag which contained his afternoon's collections, amounting to twenty-four thousand francs in gold and bank-notes.

As if to furnish a striking illustration of the real nature of the "honor" that exists among thieves, the old veteran of Africa, his only thought being for himself, ran from the room, leaving his accomplice locked in. Nothing daunted, the prisoner threw himself upon the door and soon succeeded in forcing the imperfect lock and making good his escape. Left to himself, the wounded boy attempted to descend the stairs, but, faint from the loss of blood, fell forward into the

arms of the concierge, who had been attracted by the outcry and was in the act of ascending to ascertain its cause.

The immediate future career of the two desperadoes was never made clear, but it was ascertained that they visited Issy in company, doubtless on some criminal errand. Some time after they reappeared in Paris, where, after committing some petty thefts, they seem to have parted company.

Law-breakers cannot forever avoid detection and arrest, and Francois soon found himself within the strong state prison at Poissy, but not for the crime committed in the Rue Monteguil, with which the police had not connected him. Shortly after the "retirement" of the old soldier to a place where he received no half-pay, the tall assassin was arrested at Beaure, where he had made an unsuccessful attempt to secure money by representing himself as a clerk of a noted Parisian house, giving the name of Jacob Levi.

In the meantime, the police had not been idle, but their most assiduous efforts to identify and locate the murderers of the Chardons in the Cheval Rouge had been ineffectual. Not long after the incarceration of Francois at Poissy, a report reached the police that the convict had revealed the name of the murderer, and that, according to his statement, the assassin was a tall man named Lacenaire, who was well known to the police authorities of Paris. The latter was located without difficulty, and placed under arrest.

Upon being informed of the treachery of his "friend," he flew into a veritable transport of rage, swore that he would have revenge in kind, and offered to make a full confession. Closely questioned by the examining magistrate, the details of the two awful crimes were laid bare, and the short pale-faced man who had been his accomplice in the Chardon murder, and whose name was Aveil, was apprehended. The three prisoners were speedily tried for their terrible crimes.

When the prison doors closed upon Lacenaire, he evidently realized that his infamous course was almost run. Bent upon enjoying to the utmost all that could be obtained from his few remaining days of life, he proceeded to pose as a philosopher and poet, writing verses and quoting from famous authors.

In fact, he had already attained considerable notoriety as a writer of treasonable matters, and while he was in confinement three men were tried in Paris for publishing a volume of insurrectionary songs, a number of which were from the pen of the polished murderer. One day a favorite cat that he was allowed to keep in his cell offended him in some way, and, in a sudden burst of rage, he killed it. This done, he sat down and proceeded, for the entertainment of the guards and the gratification of his own inordinate vanity, to analyze the impulses and emotions that had led to the act. "Strange," said this curious mixture of sentimentalist and monster, by way of conclusion, "that I regard the agony of that animal with a compassion I never felt for one of my human victims. The sight of a corpse, or a death agony, produced no effect upon me. I kill a man just as I drink a glass of water."

In one respect, however, this strange monstrosity was entirely consistent. He had confessed his crime, knowing well that the capital penalty would attach to himself in consequence of his confession, and he was willing to surrender his own life in order that he might obtain revenge upon those who had betrayed him. During the whole period of his confinement he expressed, and doubtless felt, an earnest longing for the day of his trial to arrive, in order that he might have the satisfaction of witnessing the conviction and listening to the sentence pronounced upon his accomplice. His chief recreation while in his cell was in occupying himself as an author.

A young advocate who had volunteered to defend him died suddenly while he was in prison. The last words of the lawyer were, "Alas, I shall reach there before him." Lacenaire, on being told of this, remarked, with a real or assumed philosophy, "Eh, Bien, sooner or later it comes to that. No doubt he suffered much before he went. I shall suffer less; I know that well enough."

Although Lacenaire was primarily induced to commit murder through motives of cupidity, there was in his depraved heart a strong impulse of revenge. His confessing bloody deeds that might have been proved with considerable difficulty, in order to condemn to the guillotine the man who had

betrayed him, clearly demonstrated this. He chided the law's delay, and, unmindful, or rather indifferent, that each day forced him nearer and nearer to the horrid scaffold with its gleaming, death-dealing knife, eagerly counted the passing days that brought him nearer and nearer to his deeply cherished revenge. The time came at last, and on the 12th day of November the sensational trial began.

Lacenaire wished to offer no defense, but an advocate was appointed for him by the Government. It is a somewhat singular fact that the more desperate the criminal on trial, and the more heartrending and gruesome the evidence to be offered, the more women—women of education and refinement, too—will crowd into a court-room. The crimes of the assassin had stirred Paris to its foundations; besides, all felt an interest in the monster who was willingly, gladly, going to the guillotine if only he could take his enemies with him, and a large number of ladies were present at the opening of the court. Lacenaire seemed to appreciate this, and to regard it as in the nature of an ovation. He was dressed with care and taste, and met each eager, curious look with a smile of mingled complacency and importance. His manners appeared so polished and his face so intelligent and refined, that the spectators could hardly believe him the monster he had been depicted. Francois and Aveil, who seemed vulgar brutes in comparison with him, sat sullen and despairing. Whenever the evidence told strongly against his accomplices, he looked at them with an expression of fiendish delight; at other times he read a book, glanced around the crowded court-room or conversed smilingly with his counsel.

It was not found difficult to show the complicity of Francois and Aveil. One Frechard, an ex-convict of Poissy, testified that during his confinement he had once saved a turnkey from death at the hands of Aveil. After his discharge from the prison he had met Aveil in Paris, when the latter had told him of the plan to murder and rob the Chardons and invited him to join the "enterprise." Battou, the pretended tailor, was also produced in court; he tremblingly admitted his guilty knowledge of the plot to murder bank-messengers, and also

that he had introduced Francois to Lacenaire, as the best man in Paris for the proposed scheme.

As to the murders in the Cheval Rouge, medical experts testified that the assassin must have wounded himself from the violence of the blows, from the circumstance that the handle of the file was covered with blood. This evidence would appear to us as rather far-fetched, yet Lacenaire readily admitted it, and, in reply to a denial from Aveil, exhibited a scar upon the palm of his right hand, and with a contemptuous smile, calmly resumed the reading of his book.

In giving his testimony, Lacenaire thus explained his reasons for denouncing Aveil and Francois: "Vengeance is my only motive. Life I do not want. For a long time I have lived only in the past. For a long time, every night, death has been sitting on my bed. Those who think I would receive a commutation are mistaken. A pardon you cannot give me, no, I shall not ask it of you, it would be valueless to me." When, calm and smiling, he reseated himself, many young lawyers crowded about him to congratulate him on his brilliant debut. "Ma foi," he said; "life is a combat. I have played well, but I have been beaten. Society did not want me when I was good for something. Whose fault was that?"

In his turn, Francois said to the jury: "You have heard that orator." Then turning to Lacenaire, who was regarding him with a sardonic smile, he shouted: "Yes, miserable scoundrel! You, who would kill every human being; it is you who drive me to the scaffold. Hear, Lacenaire; I go to death! But I shall go without fear. I shall die innocent. But you, you will turn coward at the moment of death."

"Better sooner than later," was Lacenaire's remark when he was awakened for the last time on earth, "to-morrow, if it is to be to-morrow; now if it is to be now." Then opening the manuscript volume of his memoirs which he had been preparing, he quietly wrote a final paragraph and committed it to his guard with the request that it should be given out at once for publication. This paragraph, written as it was by a man standing on the brink of eternity, whose eyes were

already raised toward the fatal knife whose descent was to send him before his final judge, is worth repeating here.

"Adieu," he wrote, "to those who have loved me, and to those who have cursed me The latter are right. And you who read these memoirs, whose every page is steeped in blood, though you will not read them till the executioner has wiped my blood from his steel triangle, give me a place in your memory. Adieu!"

The three miscreants were executed together. Contrary to the prediction of Francois, Lacenaire died without seeming fear, as he had lived without apparent conscience. In his case, the "machine" did not work properly, the grooves having become swollen from the dampness. Several times the horrid knife was released from its fastenings, but refused to fall far enough to accomplish its sanguinary task, and some minutes passed before his head finally dropped into the basket. What the mental sufferings of the wretch were during those dreadful moments, none can even conjecture, but the people of Paris fairly gloated over the incident, and announced themselves as satisfied with his punishment Sanson, who executed Lacenaire, denies this incident in his "Memoirs of the Sansons," but the official report is against him. No man likes to admit that he has bungled in his work.

To the average reader the character of Lacenaire is a strange mingling of contradictions. To conceive a man at once author and assassin, scholar and scoundrel, poet and murderer, is extremely difficult; yet such was the wretch, some of whose glaring crimes we have here outlined. The sympathy which he gave to cats he withheld from his own species. The coldness of his nature, which enabled him to perpetrate the basest of crimes without compunction, turned to fire when his own personal wrongs were to be avenged.

If, however, we accept as true the theory that there is, dormant in most human breasts, but almost universally existing, an impulse to slay, Lacenaire's character is not difficult to analyze. Possessed of a bright intellect and fruitful in resources, he could have robbed the Chardons and the bank messengers without staining his hands with blood. As a

matter of fact, he had passed the point where the perpetration of an ordinary crime satisfied the evil promptings of his depraved and perverted heart. So the boy, whose tongue is bitten by the first glass of wine he drinks, if he follows the tempter long and faithfully enough will see the day when fiery alcohol will not assuage the fiendish thirst that rages within him Crime cannot be trifled with, or be made a plaything. It must be absolutely eschewed.

Let the reader, the young reader most especially, remember that Lacenaire was once as innocent and light-hearted as himself.

To further illustrate the little reliance that can be placed in the "honor" of thieves, and to show how far fellowship and friendship can be relied upon to protect one from the cupidity of the vicious and depraved, a recent Chicago case of homicide will be cited. The actors in this bloody drama, which attracted world-wide attention at the time of its enactment, were all Italians. For the better comprehension of the reader, the facts will be presented in a narrative form, and in the order in which they were discovered by the police.

Although the crime was committed in Chicago, the first evidence of it was discovered in the city of Pittsburg. On the first day of May, 1885, the body of a man was found in a trunk at the Union Depot in that city. Before the trunk—which was a large one of the cheapest construction—was opened, it was noticed that one end was much heavier than the other. The body was doubled up, the lower limbs being tied together with a rope. The face was badly discolored, while a slender cord was wound about the neck and brought down to the wrists, around which it was firmly knotted. Their first awful shock of horror over, the employés who had forced open the trunk notified the police, who in turn telegraphed the particulars to the authorities in Chicago, from which city the trunk appeared to have been checked.

At almost the same moment the police of Chicago were placed in possession of a promising clue to the mystery. An Italian called at the police headquarters and reported that his brother, Filippo Caruso, a fruit-vender, was missing. He

had left his home two days before, and had then upon his person some three hundred dollars in currency. Caruso had made diligent search for his brother in all sections of the city where he was known, but without obtaining the slightest information. The officers suggested that the body reported as found in Pittsburg might be that of his brother, but this the unhappy man refused to believe possible.

The police at once took the case in hand. From the brother of the murdered man they learned that the latter, who was of a most amiable disposition, having saved considerable money from his business of fruit peddling, had remitted funds to Italy to bring over to America three of his boyhood friends. These three men were domiciled in Tilden Avenue, a small and, at that time, rather disreputable street, in the west division of the city,. only a few doors from the house where the Carusos lived. The early friendship existing between these four Italians appeared to have been intensified by the kindness and generosity of the missing man, who was a frequent visitor at their rooms. The three men were well acquainted with the financial condition of Filippo, and knew where he carried his money.

The first move of the police was an effort to locate these men. It was quickly learned that the entire trio had disappeared from Tilden Avenue about the time Caruso had been missed, and careful inquiry among their acquaintances failed to discover a trace of them In the meantime, the brother of Filippo had gone to Pittsburg to view the remains of the murdered man found at the Union Depot. He immediately and completely identified the body as that of his brother. The grief of the unhappy man was exaggerated by the circumstance that he had intrusted his money to his brother, and was without the means to defray the expense of removing the remains to Chicago.

The trunk had been checked from the Union Depot at Chicago, within two and one-half hours after Francesco Caruso had parted with his brother. The first step taken in the subsequent investigation looked toward the determination of the question, Who checked the trunk? The baggageman

who had attached the check was easily found, and he said that he would be able readily to identify the person to whom he had given the corresponding check. He was able to give a good description of the man, and Chief Doyle telegraphed to Inspector Byrnes of New York to look out for and arrest any Italian answering this description. It was not long before he was found and captured in a house on Wooster Street in that city, where he was temporarily stopping in company with a married Italian woman from Chicago. The husband and brother of this woman were taken into custody by the Chicago police, although there was little tangible evidence against them. The baggageman at the Union Depot, who had checked the trunk, was sent on to New York, where he fully identified the prisoner—whose name was Agostino Gelardi—as the individual who caused the trunk to be checked on the morning of Caruso's murder.

A young boy whose family lived in the same house with the three men suspected of the crime, stated that he had seen a man answering the description of Gelardi carrying a large trunk up the stairs the morning of the disappearance, and that he had also seen the same man, in company with another Italian, bringing it down, some forty minutes later, when it appeared to be much heavier. The fact was especially impressed upon his memory by the circumstance that he had followed the man upstairs, prompted by a boyish curiosity to learn what was to be done with the trunk. Gelardi, displaying a large knife, had ordered him away under threat of killing him if he remained. Further investigation resulted in finding the expressman who had hauled the trunk from a corner, some few blocks distant, to the Union Depot. Upon seeing it at the Central Station, he fully identified it as the one which he had carried in his wagon.

The other two men who had lived in the room with Gelardi were subsequently captured in Chicago. They were all much terrified, and each began to implicate the others while attempting to exonerate himself. Finally, the whole story was disclosed. Knowing that Caruso was in the habit of carrying a considerable sum of money about him, they con-

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ceived the idea of murdering him in order to obtain it. They resolved upon strangling him, and, in order to accomplish their purpose, devised a rather ingenious scheme. On the morning of April 30th, while Caruso was visiting them at their room, it was suggested that the four mutually shave each other. To this proposition their intended victim readily assented, and when it came his turn to occupy the extemporized barber's chair, one of the three villains hastily threw a rope around his neck and strangled him to death. The leg of his trousers, in which he carried his money, was then ripped open, and the plunder taken out and divided among the conspirators. After the perpetration of the crime they separated and sought safety, one in flight, the others in concealment.

"The three Italians," as they were commonly spoken of at this time, Agostino Gelardi, Aguazio Silvestri and Giovanni Azari, were found guilty of murder on July 1, 1885, and later were executed together. The two other suspected Italians were tried with them and acquitted.

CHAPTER VI

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE—SEVERAL CASES

An almost unlimited number of cases could be cited to show the fallacy of the oft-quoted aphorism, "Murder will out." Such cases work injury to society in many ways. In the first place, the cruel, revengeful or avaricious criminal goes unpunished, thus lessening the general respect for the law, and encouraging the perpetrator to indulge in similar crimes. Again, the public misses the salutary effects that would result from the detection and adequate punishment of the criminal, and others, who have entered courses of crime, but have hitherto halted this side the awful commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," remarking the good fortune of the undetected wretch, may be, and no doubt often are, tempted to "push beyond the mark," and write upon their faces the awful and ineffaceable mark of Cain. But a still greater evil remains in the wake of undetected murder. Although the perpetrator be never discovered, in the sense of being brought to justice, there are usually no end of theories advanced, involving many persons, some of whom at least, in the nature of things, must be entirely innocent. Thus thousands of people annually pass under a cloud so dark and oppressive as to destroy their usefulness and embitter their lives, together with those of many others who are connected with them by blood and association.

Innocent people are often suspected of crime, but when the mystery is cleared up, the dark veil lifts, and, so far from injuring them, excites the sympathy and often the aid of those who, otherwise, would have despised and denounced them. In the cases of murder that long baffle the skill of the detective to unravel, the first solution is often entirely different

from any theory that has been advanced by the numerous "Hawkshaws" that exist in every community on earth. That erratic and gruesome, but at the same time highly imaginative and logical, genius, Edgar Allan Poe, to whom reference has already been made in these pages, tells a story of the unraveling of a murder mystery in which the denouement showed that no murder had been committed within the strict definition of the term. While possessing a basis of substantial facts, many of the details are doubtless pure inventions of the imaginative author. The writer thinks that he has demonstrated the propriety of using fictitious illustrations when they have been evolved in a mind stored with historical and other facts, and trained to the exercise of logical methods. It will be given here in brief outline; not only as showing how ordinary theories are often wide at sea in solving complicated riddles in crime, thus explaining in part, at least, why so many murders go undetected, but as showing something of the true method of ferreting out criminals and utilizing circumstantial evidence. Poe published this gruesome case under the title, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."

The crime whose history makes up the tale, occurred in the city of Paris, something like half a century ago. Two ladies, Mme. L'Espagne and her unmarried daughter, lived alone in a large house situated in one of the most densely populated portions of the great city. About two o'clock one morning, the entire neighborhood was aroused from slumber by a series of piercing shrieks, proceeding, apparently, from the L'Espagne house. But a few minutes elapsed before an excited throng gathered in the street. Receiving no response to loud knockings, the front door was broken open, and a number of men, some of them armed, rushed into the house. Finding the lower floor untenanted, they at once began ascending the stairs. While thus employed, those in advance distinctly heard two voices, seemingly engaged in angry altercation. No words were distinct enough to be understood, but the voices were quite marked and peculiar; one was coarse and bass, the other pitched in a high key. As to the fact that there were two people above, no doubt could be entertained.

The band of investigators rushed on until the fourth and last floor of the house was gained. Here they found the door closed and securely locked on the inside. Without delay it was broken down, and, with becoming caution, the foremost men entered a large bed-chamber, usually occupied by the ladies, which was entirely untenanted. Evidences of a struggle were, however, everywhere apparent. The room was in the utmost disorder; the furniture was lying promiscuously about, an iron safe lay overturned upon the floor, while papers, clothing and various other articles were scattered about the floor.

A closer examination of the premises disclosed upon the hearth a bloody razor and a large tuft of long grey hair, bedabbled with blood, while a quantity of soot directed the attention of the searchers to the chimney. An investigation showed that the flue was entirely closed with some unknown object, to remove which required the united strength of four strong men. To the horror of the spectators, it proved to be the dead body of Mlle. L'Espagne, which had evidently been forced up the flue, feet foremost. A hurried examination of the corpse disclosed many severe contusions and abrasions, but these might have been administered in the process of concealing it from view in the chimney. The cause of death was, however, apparent. The unfortunate young lady had died from strangulation. Her eyeballs were fairly projecting from their sockets; her tongue was extended, and had been literally bitten through as though in the intense agony of an awful death-struggle, while upon her throat marks of fingers of unusual size and length, mutely though plainly, told the story of the hideous crime.

No trace of the elder lady could be found in the house, but her body was soon after discovered in the garden, with the head almost severed; apparently the work of the bloody razor.

Nothing of value seemed to have been taken, the ladies were without known enemies, and the completely baffled police speedily abandoned the case as not susceptible of solution. But as the author's scheme included the unraveling of the strange mystery, he introduced a private individual, a prede-

cessor of the Sherlock Holmes of current literature, in the realm of amateur detective work, who succeeded in working out the problem to the smallest fraction. Readers of Dr. Doyle's books may, without being themselves largely gifted with detective ability, discover in the reasoning and methods of Poe's amateur something similar to those employed by the later hero of "The Sign of the Four."

Poe's "Vidocq" began by making a careful and minute examination of the premises. He satisfied himself that the first persons upon the scene had found the only door to the apartment locked on the inside, the chimney had been tightly closed by the dead body of the murdered young lady, hence the perpetrator of the crime must have made his exit by way of one of the windows. These he found closed both by nails and automatic springs. The nail in the window nearest the fireplace was much rusted, and the sash might well have been raised; indeed, appearances indicated that it had been. To leap from the window to a trellis adjoining, he judged a possible though extremely hazardous undertaking. Not far from this window, however, was a lightning-rod which a trained athlete might have climbed.

With all these facts in his possession, the investigator, after the method still employed in story books, retired to the seclusion of his own room and proceeded to reason out the solution. And here he exercised rare ability, and adopted methods of thought entirely reasonable and decidedly scientific. His system seems to have been the elimination of all theories impossible of accomplishment, thus reducing the problem to narrow limits. In the first place, no motive could be discerned for the fearful tragedy, yet, none the less, it had taken place. This pointed to an insane or irresponsible agent. To have carried the body of Mme. L'Espagne down the slender lightning-rod he decided to be something beyond the power of a man to accomplish—yet it had been found in the garden. The fact that the united strength of four men had been necessary to dislodge the body of the younger lady from the chimney flue proved quite conclusively that no two men could have placed it there. Again, the size and length of the

marks upon the neck of the murdered young lady indicated a hand larger than that of a human being, as also did the strength that had been exerted in strangling her and in plucking a large mass of hair from the head of her mother. Lastly, the overturning of a safe weighing several hundred pounds pointed in the same direction.

It is impossible that a man, or even two men, could have accomplished these things, argued the investigator, yet they were done. The impossible having been eliminated, the only possible remaining explanation is that the deed was not perpetrated by a human being, hence it must be charged to some member of the ape family, many of which possess strength and agility far in excess of any man. When the amateur had reached this most logical conclusion, a greasy blue ribbon which he had found on the ground at the bottom of the lightning-rod, assumed an importance before unthought of. This ribbon was tied into a very curious knot, which, with the almost universal knowledge attributed to the hero of the modern novel we have referred to, Poe's investigator at once knew to be peculiar to the Maltese and to sailors employed on vessels plying to and from Maltese points. He concluded that some sailor, familiar with Malta and its peculiar customs, had brought an ourang-outang to Paris, where it had escaped from its master, climbed the lightning-rod, murdered the two ladies, thrust the body of one up the chimney and carried the other down to the garden when leaving the premises.

The affair being still a very recent occurrence, the investigator concluded that the sailor was probably still in the city. Accordingly, he inserted in the newspapers a skilfully worded advertisement asking the owner of an ourang-outang that had recently escaped from custody, to call upon him. The next day the Maltese sailor that the detective had pictured in his mind, and of whose existence he felt morally certain, presented himself. He was evidently badly frightened, but, reassured by the advertiser, was readily induced to tell his story.

The deduction of the amateur proved to have been substantially correct; indeed, the only thing he had not been able

to account for was the voices heard by the discoverers of the crime. The sailor had brought the animal with him to Paris, and on the night of the tragedy he had made his escape. The owner knew him to be of a most vicious disposition, and feared that he would kill some one; besides, he was of considerable value. Accordingly, he had started in hot pursuit. At length he saw the brute in the act of entering the window of the chamber, whither he had apparently returned after carrying down the body of Mme. L'Espagne. He had evidently leaped to the window-sill from the trellis. The owner resolved to follow the animal, but realized that it would be impossible for him to make such a leap. For a moment he was in despair, but, espying the lightning-rod, he brought into service his sailor-like accomplishment of climbing, and soon entered the chamber. A glance told him that an awful crime had been committed, although no human being was in sight. He at once attempted to capture the ourang-outang; but the beast, as if half conscious that he had done wrong and might well expect punishment, eluded him and ran from place to place, overturning the furniture and adding to the disorder already existing in the apartment. The sailor had repeatedly cried out in heavy and threatening tones, in the hope of subduing the animal, which had answered with gibberish in its peculiar shrill voice. Finally it gained the open window, and leaping upon the trellis, hastily made its escape.

At this moment the sailor heard footsteps ascending the stairs, and, realizing that his position was a most compromising one and that he might be unable to establish his innocence, he had quickly made his escape by the lightning-rod, closing the window as he left the room.

In the "Sign of the Four," to which reference has been made in this chapter, Dr. Doyle employs true detective methods. Without being in any just sense an imitation of the account we have outlined, it follows substantially the same general lines, and reaches positive conclusions by the very same mathematical rule of casting out, or rejecting, all theories that are clearly impossible. In this rather remarkable work, a murder had been committed in London by means of a

poisoned thorn which was found imbedded in the dead man's head. As in Poe's tale, the door of the room where the crime was committed was found securely closed, while a rope suspended from the window-sill told how some person had escaped after the homicide. Sherlock Holmes, the investigator, discovered that the fatal thorn had been shot from a small opening in the ceiling. Entering a low attic, he found traces of the perpetrator in the mark of a naked foot in the dust. The footprint was very small, the toes being separated in a peculiar manner. This circumstance, coupled with the shortness of the stride in walking, convinced Holmes that the murderer was a very small man, little more than a dwarf. With a universal knowledge, which, most unfortunately, no real detective on earth ever possessed, he immediately determined that the poisoned thorn was of a species indigenous to Blair's Island, one of the Andaman Islands, and found nowhere else. The natives of the island the investigator knew to be dwarfs with spreading toes, who shot poisoned thorns from blow-guns. These deductions proved correct to the smallest detail. The motive was robbery, and the murder had not been a part of the plan, which had been concocted by an English convict who had escaped from an island criminal colony through the aid of the barefooted dwarf, who had accompanied him to England. This dwarf, as great a climber as Poe's ourang-outang, had gained the roof of the house and entered the low attic through a trap-door. He had no instructions to kill the occupant of the room, toward whom the convict bore no malice, but had yielded to his natural homicidal impulse. After doing this, he lowered a rope he had brought with him, by means of which his master climbed into the chamber.

In his professional experience the author has encountered many murder mysteries in which clues were not more definite than in this case, where correct solutions were obtained. The "fine work" in this instance is more apparent than real. While the reasoning is logical and the conclusions entirely warranted, the remarkable part of the performance consists in the marvelous knowledge of the investigator, which never

fails him, and which constitutes one of the chief fascinations of the work.

In the Probst case, detailed in Chapter VIII. of this volume, a conviction founded entirely upon circumstantial evidence was secured, and its justice fully established by the confession of the condemned. Yet there was some force in the theory of the defense that Probst might possibly be innocent of the murders, though guilty of theft. As a matter of fact, many instances are on record where men convicted on circumstantial evidence have afterwards been proven innocent. An instance of this kind occurred in England in 1736.

At that time, and for some years before, Jonathan Bradford kept a public inn in Oxfordshire, on the great road from London to Oxford. During that year, a gentleman named Hayes, who was traveling from London to Oxford, put up at Bradford's Inn. At supper he was joined by two travelers, like himself strangers in the house. In conversation Mr. Hayes mentioned that he was carrying quite a large sum of money with him, in consequence of which he felt somewhat timid. Early in the evening all retired. The two gentlemen, who were traveling in company, occupied a double-bedded room near the apartment assigned to Mr. Hayes. Some hours after they had retired, one of the gentlemen was awakened by an unusual noise. Listening intently, he heard groans which seemed to proceed from a room near by. Being convinced that he had made no mistake, he hastened to arouse his companion. Together they listened for a few minutes and became convinced that the groans proceeded from some one who was dying. Securing a candle, which they had left burning in the chimney corner, they cautiously entered the hall and made their way to the adjoining chamber, from which they had concluded the sounds proceeded. They found the door ajar and a light shining within. They entered the apartment and, to their utter consternation, perceived a person lying on the bed actually weltering in his blood; while, standing over him was a man, holding a lantern in one hand and a bloody knife in the other. The man had all the appearance of terror, but it appeared to them the terror which might well overwhelm a

murderer who had accomplished his dark design. An instant later the two gentlemen perceived that the man was none other than Bradford, the landlord. Without delay they seized their host, disarmed him of his knife and charged him with being the murderer. By this time Bradford seemed to have recovered from his consternation, and vehemently asserted his innocence. He declared that, like the two gentlemen, he had been aroused by the groaning, and, seizing a knife to defend himself and a lantern to light his way, he had made his way to Hayes' chamber, where he had been overcome with horror at the fearful spectacle he there encountered.

His assertions did not receive the smallest credence; he was kept closely confined during the remainder of the night, and in the morning brought before a neighboring justice of the peace. Bradford continued to deny his guilt, but the justice, having heard the evidence, committed him to await the action of the grand jury. Such an impression had the case made upon the magistrate, that in writing out the mittimus, he remarked: "Mr. Bradford, either you or myself committed this murder."

This terrible tragedy and the arrest of Bradford became at once the subjects of general conversation for the entire county. There was not an ale-house, tavern or public place of any kind where the accused man was not put on trial for his life. Bradford had always borne an exceptionally good character, no charge of any kind of wrong-doing having ever been brought against him. Given full credit for this, every improvised court in Oxfordshire found the accused guilty, and decided that he would be hanged, if he ever got his deserts. But the universal court of Judge Gossip speedily gave place to the assizes at Oxford. Being arraigned, the prisoner entered a plea of not guilty, and the case was submitted to a jury. The two gentlemen who had discovered the murdered man with Bradford standing over him told their stories under oath, with decided effect; the fact that the landlord had heard Mr. Hayes declare that he had a large sum of money with him, and the guilty look upon his face when they discovered him with

the bloody knife in his hand, which was proven to be his own, being strongly brought out.

The defense of Bradford was the same that he had made to the two gentlemen who had surprised and seized him. He had heard the groans, had seized a knife, lighted a lantern, and, actuated by feelings of humanity and a desire to protect his guests and preserve the good name of his house, upon which a blight had never before fallen, had rushed into the room of the murdered man. He admitted that he had been seized with consternation and had, perhaps, presented a guilty-looking countenance, but declared that this was but the natural result of the horror of the occasion, and was not incompatible with his absolute innocence. Bradford was defended by able counsel, who insisted upon the inherent weakness of circumstantial evidence and the good character of their client. Their efforts were vain; a clearer case could hardly be imagined, and the jury returned a verdict of guilty, without finding it necessary to leave their box. The prisoner was promptly sentenced, and died on the scaffold three days later, protesting his innocence of the crime.

The dying declaration of Bradford was universally disbelieved, even those who had been his staunchest friends considering him clearly guilty. And yet, it ultimately turned out that he had spoken the truth. About eighteen months after the execution of the innkeeper, a man who had for some time served as his footman, fell violently ill, and being at the point of death, confessed that he, himself, had murdered Mr. Hayes. In common with his master, he had heard the traveler announce that he was carrying quite a large sum of money, and had at once conceived a plan to kill and rob him. This he had carried into execution. He had barely secured the money, gold watch and snuff-box of the murdered man, and gained his own room, when he heard Bradford approaching. He had secreted the stolen property and permitted the landlord to go to the scaffold for a crime he had not committed.

And yet Jonathan Bradford, though technically innocent, was none the less morally guilty. Before his execution he

confessed to a clergyman that he had gone to the room of Mr. Hayes with the intention of killing and robbing him. Arriving, he found the gentleman in the last agonies of death, and was so horrified and dumfounded as to be unable to move. In his excitement he dropped his knife upon the body, where it became stained with blood, as likewise were his hands in recovering it. After the confession of the servant, the clergyman made the matter public, thus clearly establishing the truth of the transaction.

The reports of this remarkable trial that have come down to us are rather meagre and do not show that any use was made by the defendant, upon his trial, of the circumstance that, though the money and valuables of Mr. Hayes were missing, they were not found upon the person of Bradford. Probably this point was made, and met with the suggestion that he had secreted the plunder and returned to make sure that his victim was dead, or to make a further search for valuables.

Contrasting this case with that of Anton Probst, Bradford appears to have been condemned on quite as good and sufficient evidence as was the murderer of the Deering family. The bearing of a prisoner from the time of the commission of a crime down to and including his trial has a decided effect upon a jury. In his soul, Bradford was overcome with all the terrors of guilt. He had led a worthy life, and his natural cupidity had tempted him to commit murder. Not being a hardened criminal, his conscience doubtless caused him to look and act like a guilty man, thus aiding in his own conviction. Had he told the jury the real facts in the case, it would hardly have availed him, since the truth would have appeared vastly more improbable than the lie he concocted, which, though highly unreasonable, carried with it something of plausibility.

Another instance of conviction upon circumstantial evidence is that of William Shaw, who was executed in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1721. Shaw was an upholsterer, with one child, a daughter, named Catherine. Even at that early day, Edinburgh had anticipated the modern apartment-house, and a considerable portion of the people lived in large buildings divided into what we now term "flats," where a single

entrance accommodated several different families. In apartments of this descrpition lived William Shaw and his daughter. Catherine had encouraged the addresses of a young man named John Lawson, a jeweler to whom the father was violently opposed. In turn he had presented a suitor for her hand in the person of the son of a friend, named Alexander.

One evening, a man named Morrison, whose apartments adjoined those of the Shaws, overheard the father and daughter seemingly engaged in an angry altercation. Unable to understand the entire conversation, he distinctly heard the words "barbarity," "cruelty," "death," in the voice of Catherine. These words were several times repeated. At length Shaw left his daughter, locking the door after him. For some time after the father left, absolute silence ensued, but after a time Morrison heard groans which evidently emanated from the daughter's room. Thoroughly alarmed, he summoned some neighbors. The party approached the door, and, listening intently, heard Catherine say, "Cruel father, thou art the cause of my death." A constable was summoned and the door broken open. Catherine Shaw was found weltering in her blood, a knife in her side. She was alive, but speechless. In answer to a question whether her father was the cause of her death, she seemed to nod her head, as indicating an affirmative answer, and almost immediately expired.

At this very moment Shaw entered the room. He saw his neighbors and the constable, noted his daughter dead upon the bed, and seemed ready to sink to the floor. The officers at once placed him under arrest, and found marks of blood upon his shirt front, which he claimed had come from a wound upon his own person.

William Shaw was arraigned upon the charge of having murdered his daughter. The facts set forth were proven against him, and he was convicted. In November, 1721, he was executed, and his body hanged in chains at Leith Walk.

Was there a person in Edinburgh who believed the father guiltless? No, not one! notwithstanding his last words at the gallows were: "I am innocent of my daughter's murder."

But in August, 1722, as a man, who had become the possessor of the late William Shaw's apartments, was rummaging by chance in the chamber where Catherine Shaw died, he accidentally perceived a paper fallen into a cavity on one side of the chimney. It was folded as a letter, which, on opening, contained the following: "Barbarous father, your cruelty in having put it out of my power ever to join my fate to that of the only man I could love, and tyrannically insisting upon my marrying one whom I always hated, has made me form a resolution to put an end to an existence which has now become a burden to me. I doubt not I shall find mercy in another world; for sure no benevolent being can require that I should any longer live in torment to myself in this! My death I lay to your charge; when you read this consider yourself as the inhuman wretch that plunged the knife into the bosom of the unhappy—Catherine Shaw."

This letter being shown, the handwriting was recognized and avowed to be Catherine Shaw's by many of her relations and friends. It became the public talk; the magistracy of Edinburgh, on a scrutiny, being convinced of its authenticity, ordered the body of William Shaw to be taken from the gibbet, and given to his family for interment; and, as the only possible reparation to his memory and the honor of his surviving relations, they caused a pair of colors to be waved over his grave in token of his innocence, such being at that time the Scotch custom.

The cases of Jonathan Bradford and William Shaw are well known to criminal lawyers, and have been scores, perhaps hundreds, of times repeated to juries who were called to pass upon the guilt or innocence of prisoners where the cause of the prosecution rested entirely, or largely, upon circumstantial evidence. Doubtless they have often proved effective, yet hardly with reason. In the nature of things, human testimony is, at the best, defective. That circumstances sometimes weave themselves into a chain that seemingly establishes the guilt of a really innocent person, the instances cited, and numerous others that might be referred to, abundantly prove. But is circumstantial evidence to be sweepingly condemned and

systematically discredited on this account? When everything is taken into account the answer must certainly be in the negative. Not only is circumstantial evidence to be credited, but in some respects it is entitled to higher consideration than the testimony of eye-witnesses. The latter may, often do, lie with impunity, while it is only rarely—so rarely that the instances become historical—that a sequence of events, when critically considered, leads to false conclusions. Even in cases that depend upon direct testimony, the strongest supports are often trivial incidents, by which the truth of the main statement is made to stand or fall. This is well understood by the attorney skilled in cross-examination, who always endeavors to discredit the witness by bringing his statements into direct conflict with a clearly and definitely established fact.

Circumstantial evidence is entitled to the highest credit, but, at the same time, it should be closely, and, what is more to the point, intelligently, criticised. In the experience of the author—who has had much to do with the detection and punishment of crime—where this class of evidence misleads, it is usually because it is not carefully weighed, or is chargeable to unscrupulous methods on the part of lawyers or detectives. One fact is clear; for every innocent man who has been hanged upon circumstantial evidence, ten, probably ten times ten, of the same class have suffered death through direct evidence, based upon deliberate perjury. If this be doubted, read the chapter on Judicial Murders in the present volume, and learn that men are greater and more successful liars than facts.

Of all crimes conceivable by the human mind none arouse such feelings of abhorrence and detestation as matricide. It seems incredible that one can become so debased, so utterly lost, not alone to the natural feelings of a man, but to the instincts of a brute as well, that he can deliberately take the life of the mother that bore and nourished him. Yet, without being common, such crimes are by no means rare. In the recorded cases, anger and drunkenness will generally be found the moving causes. While these offer nothing by way of excuse, they place the offense on a different footing than

those where it is committed from motives of cupidity. One of the most notable cases of matricide for gain, in the sense of being cruel and repulsive, occurred in 1889 in the State of Michigan, a conviction being obtained on circumstantial evidence alone.

On the morning of January 24th, of that year, pursuant to a previous appointment, a paperhanger went to the house of a Mrs. Latimer, a widow lady, living in the city of Jackson, Michigan. On arriving, he found the door open, and entering, was horror-stricken to discover the woman he had called to see dead upon the floor of her bedroom. Rushing from the house, he hurriedly gave the alarm, and the police at once began an investigation. They found a bullet wound in her neck and another in her face, while the position of the wounds seemed to indicate that the assassin had been leaning over his victim when he fired. Evidently, neither of these wounds had proved fatal, and from the position of the body it was the opinion of the police that the unfortunate lady had succeeded in getting out of her bed after being shot and in staggering to the corner of the room, where she either fell or was struck down by the murderer. Here she had been strangled to death, and her assailant, when life was extinct, raising her head and resting it on the cushioned arm of an easy chair, had carefully straightened out her night-dress and smoothed each ruffle as if she herself had deliberately lain down there to take her own life.

Upon the door of the cellar, marks were found which suggested the work of a burglar's "jimmy," but they lacked the appearance of freshness, and left the police in doubt as to how ingress to the house had been obtained by the murderer.

The first theory was that the murder had been committed for the purpose of robbery, but this was abandoned almost as soon as formed. Apparently not a drawer had even been opened. The silver standing upon the mantel was untouched, and the murdered woman's jewelry, some of which was of considerable value, had not been disturbed. But other traces of the awful deed were not wanting. In a room in the rear of the apartment where the body was discovered, which had

been formerly occupied by the dead woman's son, Irving Latimer, there were blood stains upon the carpet and on the white counterpane of the bed, and also on the thumb-screw of the gas burner and the handle of the door. In this room also was found a silk handkerchief which had been apparently used in strangling the lady, still moist with blood.

Such a crime would horrify the entire population of the largest city in the world, and in Jackson, where Mrs. Latimer had been generally known and universally respected, an intense excitement was created by its discovery, and the deepest sympathy was expressed for young Latimer. He had gone to Detroit on the day before the commission of the murder, but, being notified by the chief of police of the tragedy, at once returned home. Although not a breath of suspicion had as yet attached to him, his bearing attracted attention. He seemed to manifest little concern, and, on his way from the railway depot to the family residence, conversed carelessly with a companion upon a number of indifferent topics. But as he approached the house where groups of sad-faced people were discussing the tragedy and certain to observe his actions, his demeanor underwent a radical change; he walked with bowed head, while tears coursed down his face. To such as spoke to him he expressed himself as being inexpressibly grieved and shocked at the terrible affliction which had overtaken him. To the officers who sympathetically accompanied him to the chamber where the remains of his mother had been decorously laid out, he swore a solemn oath that he would never rest until he had discovered and brought to justice the perpetrators of the brutal crime which had deprived him of the best friend he had on earth.

It is always easy to form theories after the secret is out, and those who were present at this scene afterwards recalled that his tone and manner had seemed to lack something of sincerity. He eagerly assented to the suggestion that the murder had been committed by a burglar, and at once set about ransacking all the drawers and closets with the ostensible hope of finding some evidence in confirmation of this theory. He conducted the search hastily and clumsily, and when he

had completed it declared that a pocketbook and certain articles of jewelry belonging to his mother were missing. His attention being directed to the fact that many valuable articles in plain sight had been left undisturbed, he had no explanation to offer. These circumstances, considered in connection with some of his subsequent actions, finally directed suspicion toward him. Accordingly, an investigation into his conduct and movements immediately prior to the murder was set on foot.

It was at once suggested that Irving was the only person who could possibly benefit by the death of Mrs. Latimer, he being her sole heir, and it was soon learned that he was deeply in debt and being hard pressed by his creditors. It was further discovered that, although individually without resources, he had promised to make several large payments on the very day when the body was discovered. An examination as to his whereabouts on the night of the murder disclosed some exceedingly damaging evidence against him. As already stated, he had gone to Detroit the day before the discovery, professedly on business, where he had registered at the Griswold House.

His conduct, both at the hotel and upon the streets, had been that of a man anxious to render himself conspicuous. He had lounged about a number of saloons and had visited one or two disreputable resorts. About nine o'clock in the evening he called at the hotel office for the key of his room, and ostentatiously announced that he was going to bed. His bed was found the next morning in disorder, but it was learned that instead of seeking his couch, he had returned to Jackson, at which place he had boarded an early morning train on his return trip to Detroit. A train hand was found who recognized him as a man to whom his attention had been particularly directed by his evident desire to escape observation; his coat collar being turned up and his head kept well forward on his breast. An inquiry into his actions after returning to Detroit showed that he had visited a barber shop in the neighborhood of the Griswold House shortly after his train reached that city. The man who waited on him noticed a large spot of blood upon the left sleeve of his coat, and directed his

attention thereto. Latimer exhibited great nervousness and surprise, uttered a peculiar exclamation, and immediately set about attempting to wash it off with water and soap. The barber afterward noticed other blood stains on his clothes, but was too frightened and too much excited to say anything about them. Upon his return to his hotel he at once repaired to his room, the door of which the chambermaid saw him unlock. She had noticed the condition of the bed, and had been satisfied that the disarrangement of the bed-clothes had not been caused by any one sleeping in it through the night.

These discoveries pointed so plainly to Latimer as his mother's murderer that he was placed under arrest. After being locked in a cell he was seen trying to conceal a pair of socks, a circumstance which resulted in his being required to give up all his clothing. The socks which he had been seeking to hide were deeply stained with blood, as were also his trousers and coat. When called upon to account for the stains upon his socks, he said that the blood had come from a recent operation for corns upon his feet. His feet did indeed show scars, but it was easy to see that they were not of recent origin, and even if he had cut his corns himself, as he claimed, it was palpably absurd that he should have drawn on his socks while his feet were yet bleeding; but even supposing that he had done so, it was certain that he could not have lost enough blood from this cause to produce the observed effect. Moreover, a close examination of his patent-leather shoes disclosed that they too were stained with blood. From all these circumstances it was inferred that young Latimer had entered his mother's room in his stocking feet, and after doing his bloody work had been in such haste to catch the earliest train for Detroit that he had drawn on his shoes without either drying or changing his socks. While lying in prison, he told innumerable lies, but of such a contradictory character as to rivet yet more firmly the links in the chain of evidence which was to drag him to his doom.

Popular indignation against the prisoner was at fever heat, and threats of lynching were freely and openly made. It was even said that he had been guilty of poisoning his father, who

had died suddenly and under peculiar circumstances, leaving policies of insurance upon his life amounting to sixteen thousand dollars, under some of which Irving was a beneficiary.

The testimony against him, while wholly circumstantial, was too strong to admit of any reasonable doubt as to his guilt. He was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment in the state penitentiary during the term of his natural life, that being the most extreme penalty then known to the criminal code of Michigan.

The story of this monstrous crime properly ends here, but a few lines as to the murderer's career in prison may prove interesting and instructive, as showing the ingenuity of the condemned and the light estimate he placed upon human life. A good conversationalist and of most engaging manners, he succeeded in ingratiating himself with several of the officials of the prison, the discipline of which seems to have been remarkably lax. Latimer was permitted to indulge in various delicacies, such as chocolate and lemonade, the materials for making which he kept in his cell. He was allowed the freedom of the corridors at unusual hours, and often treated the keepers on duty. He told a most seductive fairy story of a large sum of money that had been buried by his father on a small island off the coast of Rhode Island, and promised to give one of his keepers, who was about to leave the prison, a diagram that would enable him to locate and secure it. In this way he gradually gained the confidence of the turnkeys. One night, some three years after his incarceration, he gave his keepers some lemonade, which, thanks to his chemical knowledge, and the possession of poison which he had somehow managed to secure, probably from the prison laboratory to which he had access, he was able to convert into a death-dealing beverage. All the officers were prostrated, and one of them almost immediately expired. In the confusion, Latimer secured a bunch of keys and made good his escape. A few days later he was apprehended while endeavoring to purchase a pair of shoes in a small Michigan village, and returned to the prison, where, at the present writing, he still remains.

At the time of the commission of this most revolting crime, Latimer was less than twenty-four years of age. He was well educated, and a chemist by profession. He had ample means to support himself, but fell a victim to those quadruple evils suggested in the old rhyme:

> "Women and wine, game and deceit,
> Make the wealth small, the want great."

Excesses had plunged him into debt and so perverted his nature that the gratification of his passions became the one motive of his life.

Although we have classified this case as matricide, in a strict sense it does not fall within the category. Having lost an only child, an infant son, Mr. and Mrs. Latimer adopted a boy in Rhode Island. They knew his father had been a criminal, yet they fancied they saw a resemblance to their dead child, and disregarded the theory of the transmission of criminal impulses by heredity. These facts were not made known until after the death of Mrs. Latimer. Irving Latimer had not the slightest intimation of his real parentage, and took her life believing that she was the woman to whom he owed his existence. Thus, so far as he was concerned, the crime was that of matricide.

"Like mother, like son," is a fairly safe adage to quote, and it will be something of a relief to the reader to know that so good a woman as Mrs. Latimer surely was did not give birth to the unnatural monster who so barbarously took her life. On the other hand, his criminal instincts may well be traced to his depraved father.

CHAPTER VII

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE—THE WEBSTER-PARKMAN CASE

On Friday, November 23, 1849, Doctor George Parkman, a wealthy and highly respected citizen of Boston, and one of the founders of the Massachusetts Medical College of that city, suddenly disappeared from view. Dr. Parkman, who was about sixty years of age, and a man of very active habits, had been about the city during that day, attending to his business as usual. Almost the last trace discovered of him was at a green-grocer's, where he had purchased some lettuce for an invalid daughter. He was noted for his great punctuality, and his absence from the family table at the regular hour for dinner, half-past three o'clock, excited surprise and some uneasiness, which increased to positive alarm when he did not appear in the evening. The following day a most systematic search was instituted for the missing gentleman, which was stimulated by the offer of liberal rewards for his discovery, and extended to a distance of from fifty to sixty miles from the city.

On the Sunday following the disappearance it was learned that Dr. Parkman had, on November 23d, met by appointment Dr. John W. Webster, Professor of Chemistry in the Harvard University, Cambridge, and lecturer on chemistry in the Medical College, Boston, in the rooms of the latter in the college. This information was furnished by Dr. Webster himself, who appeared to have been the last person who had seen Dr. Parkman.

To the Rev. Dr. Francis Parkman, a brother of the missing man, of whose church Dr. Webster had at one time been a member, he made substantially the following statement: He was indebted to Dr. Parkman and had called on him on Friday morning, November 23d, and arranged that Parkman should

call upon him that afternoon at half-past one, which he accordingly did, carrying some papers in his hand. Without delay, Webster had handed his visitor $483, and some odd cents. Upon receiving it, Dr. Parkman took a note from among the papers in his hand, dashed a pen through the signature of Dr. Webster, handed it to that gentleman and hurriedly quitted the room, after remarking that he would have the mortgage cancelled. It was also learned that, on the previous Monday, Dr. Parkman had, in the college building, upbraided Professor Webster for not paying him the money, had accused him of disposing of a portion of the property—a cabinet of minerals—upon which he held a mortgage, and remarked in conclusion, "Something must be done to-morrow."

In the meantime, every clue that was discovered led to the Medical College and terminated there; no one being found who had seen the missing man after his interview with Professor Webster. Two examinations of the college were made, one on Monday, which was a mere matter of form to serve as an excuse for searching other buildings, and another on the next day. Neither of these searches led to the slightest discovery.

While this was being done, one man had serious suspicions which led to the ultimate discovery of an awful crime. This man was the janitor of the college, Littlefield by name. He began a systematic espionage upon the movements of Professor Webster, and upon Friday, November 30th, discovered in the laboratory, and a vault connected with it, certain human remains, which he at once concluded to be those of Dr. George Parkman. The discovery was effected in the following manner: Besides apartments on the first floor of the building, consisting of a lecture room with a laboratory behind it provided with a stove, water and sink, Dr. Webster had, on the basement floor, another laboratory, reached by a stairway from the upper one, containing an assay furnace and also provided with running water and a sink. Connected with this laboratory was a private closet, with an opening into a vault at the base of the building, into which the sea water was admitted. Into this vault there was no opening other than that from the

private closet. When all other parts of the college had been examined without results, Littlefield resolved to investigate this vault. Choosing those times for his work when Professor Webster was not about the premises, the janitor broke a hole through the brick and mortar wall, at a point below the closet. No sooner was the opening completed than the horrified Littlefield discovered within the vault parts of a male human body. These consisted of the pelvis—the hip bones—the right thigh from the hip to the knee, and the left leg from the knee to the ankle.

As a matter of course, these fearfully incriminating discoveries led to Dr. Webster's immediate apprehension. A more minute examination of the premises was at once made, which led to further disclosures. In a tea-chest, buried in tan-bark and covered with specimens of minerals, were found a large hunting-knife, a thorax—chest—with both clavicles and scapulæ attached, and having a perforation in the region of the heart, and a left thigh, to which was tied a piece of string.

Examined by experts in the college, these parts were decided to belong to one human body, there being no duplicates and all fitting together. By means of measurements and calculations, they were determined to have belonged to a man about five feet ten and a half inches in height, which corresponded closely with that of the missing Dr. Parkman.

Among the ashes of the furnace were found a pearl shirt button; a human tooth with a hole in it, which appeared to have been once filled; about two hundred grains of gold; three blocks of mineral teeth, and a large number of fragments of bone belonging to the skull, face, neck, hands and other portions of a human body.

The trial of John W. Webster was held in Boston, before the Hon. Samuel S. Shaw, Chief Justice, and three associate justices of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. It began on March 19, 1850, and continued for eleven days, one hundred and sixteen witnesses being examined, forty-seven of these being in behalf of the accused. To say that this trial excited intense interest would very mildly express the situation. The public was almost crazed, and business at Boston,

and quite generally throughout New England, was well-nigh suspended. Dr. Parkman had been widely known, and his figure was a familiar one to nearly every inhabitant of Boston. With Dr. Webster the public was still better acquainted; he was on terms of intimacy with the most celebrated men in the country, and was everywhere most highly esteemed. He had been a professor of chemistry for twenty years, possessed a very fine scientific library, and one of the most complete musical libraries of America. That such a man could have been guilty of a brutal murder, followed by revolting attempts at concealment, the public quite generally refused to believe possible. It is undoubtedly true that no crime in the annals of this country has ever attracted such general and long-sustained interest.

Space does not permit a presentation of more than a bare outline of the mass of evidence introduced in this strongly contested case. Depending entirely upon a large number of circumstances which were so dovetailed together as to present an almost unbroken chain, connecting the accused directly with the crime, the case for the State was the most remarkable array of circumstantial evidence ever presented in this country.

The height, indicated by the remains, was exactly that of Dr. Parkman. The time of life was proven to be similar. Dr. Parkman had a prominent rising chin, and the bones presented that peculiarity. The left side of the lower jaw showed a remarkable irregularity, which a dentist who had made artificial teeth for Dr. Parkman, swore existed in his jaw.

But the most satisfactory identification of the remains was furnished by the three blocks of mineral teeth, already referred to as having been found in the laboratory furnace. These were positively identified by Dr. Nathan Keep, a Boston dentist, as having been made by him for Dr. Parkman in October and November, 1846. The testimony of Dr. Keep was remarkable for its detail, and was given in part from memory and in part from certain memoranda kept by all dentists. He produced in court the original models from which the gold plates were made, which showed irregularities

corresponding to those indicated by the jawbones of the remains. The identification was full and complete, and was not impaired to the smallest extent by a long and most severe cross-examination.

Dr. Keep's assistant, Dr. Lester Noble, corroborated his testimony in many particulars. It was also shown that there are peculiarities in the work of every dentist which make it as easy for him to identify it as for an artist to make sure that he has painted a certain picture.

Dr. Keep testified that when Dr. Parkman ordered the teeth he asked if they could be completed by a certain time, saying that unless they could be he did not want them. The reason for this was that the Massachusetts Medical College was about to be opened with some inaugural ceremonies, on a stated day. He was one of the endowers of the institution, having donated the land upon which it was built, and thought it possible that he might have to make some remarks upon the occasion. The work was completed with some difficulty, and was only ready a few minutes before the doctor called for it on his way to the college. It seems a remarkable coincidence that these teeth should have been ordered for the opening of a college towards which Dr. Parkman had contributed liberally, and where he was afterwards murdered, and that they should prove the chief evidence by which his mangled and half-burned remains were positively identified. In a novel, such a combination would almost be thought overdrawn.

A number of medical men of great prominence testified for the State on questions looking to the identification of the remains, among them being Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, long eminent both as a physician and poet. At the time of the trial he was Parkman Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in Harvard University, the professorship having been so named in honor of Dr. George Parkman.

The evidence connecting Professor Webster with the crime, while entirely of a circumstantial character, was so complete and full as to leave no reasonable doubt in the mind of any candid and unbiased person as to his guilt. It was shown that after the disappearance of Dr. Parkman he ordered that

no fire be built in his rooms, and yet that he had a fire and was there during much longer hours than usual, including Sunday, a very unusual thing with him. He instructed an express-man, named Sawin, to bring him some fagots and a quantity of tan-bark to the college, and leave them in the janitor's cellar. Always before Sawin had left articles in the profes-sor's rooms. This order was given on the Monday after the disappearance. When it is remembered that a portion of the body was found packed in tan-bark, the importance of the point becomes apparent. The statement made by the defend-ant that he had paid nearly five hundred dollars to Dr. Park-man on the last day he was seen alive proved a most unfortunate one, since he was unable to show where he had procured the money. Dr. Webster's position in the medical college was entirely distinct from his professorship in the University of Cambridge. In the former institution, his com-pensation consisted of tickets which he sold to students for his lectures. This money was coming in at the time, and it was from this source that he promised to pay Dr. Parkman. Yet it was shown that all this money, with the exception of $90, which he deposited in a bank after that fatal Friday, had been expended elsewhere. This $90 he received from his ticket-seller on the morning of the murder. The doctor told this man that he had paid Dr. Parkman, and that there would be no further trouble.

Dr. Webster was arrested at his home in Cambridge, on the evening of November 30, just one week after the murder of Dr. Parkman. He was told that they wished him to come to the college in the city, and did not know that he was under arrest until actually inside the jail. He broke down and acted in a most distressing manner, the officers deposing that they had never seen a man laboring under such intense excitement. It afterwards transpired that he was suffering from the effects of poison, taken with suicidal intent. Later, he was removed to the college and shown the remains which were spread out upon a table. It required the strength of two men to support him during this ordeal. Here he made a remark that sug-gests the famous case of Eugene Aram, set forth elsewhere in

this volume. "Those bones," said he, "are no more Dr. Parkman's than they are mine." Other points of resemblance between these two prominent cases are found in the circumstance that both men were of marked intellectual ability and widely known as authors and men of great attainments; that neither is generally believed to have been a deliberate murderer; that both, before conviction, maintained their entire innocence and attempted suicide; that each addressed the jury in his own behalf, and afterwards made a written confession.

While in jail, the accused man wrote one of his daughters a letter in which he asked her to tell her mother not to open a certain little packet, which he described. The letter was read by the authorities and the packet secured. It was found to contain the two notes given by Webster to Parkman, with a heavy pen mark across the signature of the former. Before the arrest of Dr. Webster, three letters, written in a scrawling hand, and tending to throw the authorities off the track, were addressed to Francis Tukey, City Marshal of Boston. These were shown to be in the handwriting of Professor Webster. The point was strongly combated by the defense, but was so well established as to make a strong impression upon the jury. The defendant subsequently admitted that he had written one of the letters. In all probability he was the author of all three. There were many other points adduced; such as blood stains upon the defendant's clothing and slippers, the presence of chemicals, probably used in effacing blood marks and treating portions of the remains, together with his peculiar bearing during the week between the homicide and his arrest.

The defense, while somewhat ingenious, was, as in the nature of things it needs must be, decidedly weak. It consisted largely of an array of witnesses, some of them of great prominence, who swore to the excellent character of the accused. Indeed, the principal efforts of his counsel were directed to this matter and to convince the jury that a man of Dr. Webster's high character was quite incapable of committing such a diabolical deed. As to the presence within the precincts of the premises occupied exclusively by the defendant, of the

remains, no explanation was offered, the theory being that they were placed there by some one who had access to the place. The tendency of this was to throw suspicion upon and discredit the testimony of Littlefield, the janitor, through whose efforts the crime was first discovered. Neither did they explain from what source the professor had obtained the money he claimed to have paid Dr. Parkman on the day of the latter's disappearance, except to say that he had been accumulating it for some time.

Counsel for the defendant made a most vigorous attack upon all the evidence of the State as being circumstantial, and hence unreliable. The prosecution accepted this issue, and the debate is one of great interest and decided value to the legal fraternity. Before delivering his charge to the jury, Chief-Justice Shaw asked the prisoner if he had anything to add to what his counsel had said in his behalf. Against the decided protests of his attorneys, Professor Webster arose, and with great apparent composure and decided earnestness, addressed the jury, speaking for nearly half an hour. His speech was principally confined to questions of fact and solemn protestations of his innocence. As to the fact that he had maintained great calmness during the trial, he said: "It has been said that I have been calm. If I have seemed so, I have not been conscious of it. My counsel have pressed me to keep as calm as possible; and my very calmness has been brought to bear against me. In one sense I have been calm; my trust has been in my God, and in my innocence." It should be understood that at this time a prisoner could not testify in his own behalf in Massachusetts.

After a very fair and comprehensive charge by the court, the jury retired, and in three hours returned a verdict of guilty. On Monday, April 1st, Chief-Justice Shaw, in a most impressive manner, sentenced Dr. Webster to death. Great efforts were made to save the life of the condemned. An appeal was taken, and the case argued in a manner that has made it one of the leading authorities in American law on the question of circumstantial evidence. An appeal for a commutation of sentence to imprisonment having proved ineffec-

tual, the condemned man was executed in Boston on the 30th day of August, 1850.

Before the application for the writ of error, and about three weeks after the verdict, an application was made to Hon. George N. Briggs, Governor of Massachusetts and the Council of the State, for a re-hearing of the case. In his petition Dr. Webster asserted his innocence in the most positive terms. Among other things he subscribed to the following:

"To Him who seeth in secret, and before whom I may ere long be called to appear, would I appeal for the truth of what I now declare, as also for the truth of the solemn declaration that I had no agency in placing the remains of a human body in or under my rooms in the Medical College in Boston, nor do I know by whom they were so placed. I am the victim of circumstances, or a foul conspiracy, or of the attempt of some individual to cause suspicion to fall upon me, influenced perhaps by the prospect of obtaining a large reward."

Before this petition was acted upon the court decided adversely to his application for a writ of error, whereupon Dr. Webster withdrew his petition to the Governor, and filed another one, asking for clemency. In this he gave the lie to his previous solemn statement and confessed that he had killed Dr. Parkman. It was quite a long statement, but the salient points, so far as the commission of the crime and the disposition of the body are concerned, are as follows:

"Tuesday, the 20th of November, I sent a note to Dr. Parkman, asking him to call at my rooms Friday, the 23d, after my lecture. He had become of late very importunate for his pay. He had threatened me with a suit; to put an officer in my house. The purport of my note was simply to ask the conference. I did not tell him in it what I could do, or what I had to say about the payment. I wished to gain for those few days a release from his solicitations, to which I was liable every day, upon occasions and in a manner very disagreeable and alarming to me, and also to omit, for so long a time at least, the fulfillment of recent threats of severe measures. I did not expect to pay him when Friday should arrive.

"My purpose was, if he should accede to the proposed interview, to state to him my embarrassment and utter inability to pay him at present, to apologize for those things in my conduct which had offended him, to throw myself upon his mercy, to beg for further time and indulgence for the sake of my family, if not for myself, and to make as good promises to him as I could have any hope of keeping. I did not hear from him that day, nor the next (Wednesday); but I found that Thursday he had been abroad in pursuit of me, though without finding me. I feared he had forgotten the appointment, or else did not mean to wait for it. I feared he would come in upon me at my lecture hour, or while I was preparing my experiments for it. Therefore, I called at his house that morning (Friday), between eight and nine to remind him of my wish to see him at the college at half-past one—my lecture closing at one. I did not then stop to talk with him, for I expected the conversation would be a long one, and I had my lecture to prepare for. Dr. Parkman agreed to call on me as I proposed. He came accordingly, between half-past one and two. He came in at the lecture room door. I was engaged in removing some glasses from my lecture room table into the room at the rear, called the upper laboratory. He came rapidly toward me and followed me into the laboratory. He immediately addressed me with great energy: 'Are you ready, sir? Have you got the money?' I replied: 'No, Dr. Parkman,' and was beginning to make my appeal to him. He would not listen to me, but interrupted me with great vehemence. He called me a 'scoundrel,' 'liar,' and went on heaping upon me the most bitter taunts and opprobrious epithets.

"While he was talking he drew from his pocket a handful of papers, and took from them my two notes, and also an old letter from Dr. Hossah congratulating him (Dr. P.) on his success in getting me appointed professor of chemistry. 'You see,' said he, 'I got you into your office, and now I will get you out of it.' He then put into his pocket all the papers except the letter and the two notes. I cannot tell how long the torrent of threats and invectives continued, and I can now recall but a small portion of what he said. At first I kept interposing,

trying to pacify him, so that I might obtain the object for which I sought the interview. But I could not stop him, and soon my own temper was up. I forgot everything. I felt nothing but the sting of his words. I was excited to the highest degree of passion, and while he was speaking and gesticulating in the most violent and menacing manner, thrusting the letter and his fist into my face, in my fury I seized whatever thing was handiest—it was a stick of wood—and dealt him an instantaneous blow with all the force that passion could give it. I did not know, nor think, nor care, where I should hit him, nor how hard, nor what the effect would be. It was on the side of his head, and there was nothing to break the force of the blow. He fell instantly on the pavement. There was no second blow. He did not move. I stooped over him, and he seemed to be lifeless. Blood flowed from his mouth, and I got a sponge and wiped it away. I applied restoratives, but without effect. I spent perhaps ten minutes in my endeavor to resuscitate him, but I found that he was absolutely dead. In my horror and consternation I ran instinctively to the doors and bolted them. And then what was I to do? It never occurred to me to go out and declare what I had done and obtain assistance. I saw nothing but the alternative of a successful removal and concealment of the body on one hand, and of infamy and destruction on the other.

"The first thing I did, as soon as I could do anything, was to drag the body into the private room adjoining. Then I stripped it and carefully burned the clothes. They were all consumed there that afternoon, with papers, pocketbook, or whatever else they might have contained. I did not examine the pockets or remove anything except the watch. That I took and threw over the bridge as I went home to Cambridge. My next move was to get the body into the sink, which stands in a small private room. Then it was entirely dismembered. It was quickly done as a work of terrible and desperate necessity. The only instrument used was the knife found by the officers in the tea chest, and which I kept for cutting cork. While dismembering the body a stream of water was kept running through the sink, thus carrying off the blood. There

DR. WEBSTER CONFRONTED WITH THE REMAINS OF DR. PARKMAN.—PAGE 107.

was a fire burning in the furnace in the lower laboratory, which I had kindled that day for the purpose of making oxygen gas. The head and viscera were put in the furnace that day, and the fuel heaped on. Some of the extremities, I believe, were also burned that day. The pelvis and some of the limbs were put under the lid of the lecture room table, in what is called the well—a deep sink, lined with lead. A stream of water was turned on and kept running all through Friday. The thorax was put in a similar well in the lower laboratory, which I filled with water, and threw in a quantity of potash which I found there. This disposition of the remains was not changed till after the visit of the officers Monday. When the body had been all thus disposed of I cleared away all traces of what had been done. The stick with which the fatal blow had been struck I put into the fire. It was a grape-vine stump, say two inches in diameter and two feet long. I had carried it from Cambridge to the college long before, to show the effect of certain chemicals in coloring woods.

"I took the two notes from the table, seized an old metallic pen and dashed it across the face and through the signature, and put them in my pocket. I had as yet given no thought as to what account I should give of the object or results of my interview with Dr. Parkman. I left the college to go home at six o'clock. I collected myself as well as I could, that I might meet my family and friends with composure. Saturday I visited the college, but made no change in the disposition of the remains, and laid no plans as to my future course. When, Saturday evening, I read the notice in the papers concerning the disappearance, I was deeply impressed with my taking some ground as to the character of my interview with Dr. Parkman, for I saw it must become known that I had had such an interview. The question exercised me much, but Sunday my course was taken. I would go to Boston and be the first to declare myself as the person, as yet unknown, with whom Dr. Parkman had Friday morning made the appointment. I would take the ground that I had invited him to the college to pay him money, and that I had paid him accordingly. I fixed

upon the sum by taking the notes and adding the interest, which, it appears, I cast erroneously. If I had thought of this course earlier I would not have deposited Tetter's check for $90 in the bank Saturday, but would have suppressed it, as going so far toward making up the sum which I was to profess having paid the day before. I looked into the rooms Sunday afternoon, but did nothing. Monday, after the first visit of the officers, I took the pelvis and some of the limbs from the upper well and threw them into the vault under the privy. I packed the thorax in the tea chest as found. Wednesday I built another fire in the furnace and burned some of the limbs, which was the last I had to do with the remains."

Had Professor Webster made this statement when first arrested, or even after his conviction, instead of so vehemently protesting his entire innocence, it is very possible that his sentence might have been commuted. As it was, his petition was rejected, and all hope of life swept away. When every hope was gone the condemned man regained his composure and admitted the entire justice of his impending fate. To a Mr. Andrews, who visited him the Sunday before his execution, he said:

"Mr. Andrews, I consider this whole thing perfect justice. The officers of the law are right; everybody is right; and I am wrong! And I feel that if yielding up my life to the injured law will atone, even in part, for the crime I have committed, that it is a consolation!"

Two days before his execution, in an interview with the sheriff, he made the following reply to an allusion as to the possibility of his committing suicide:

"Why should I? All the proceedings in my case have been just. The court discharged their duty! The law-officers of the commonwealth did their duty, and no more! The verdict of the jury was just! The sentence of the court was just; and it is just that I should die on the scaffold, in accordance with that sentence."

Dr. Webster met death with composure and resignation, and professed full faith and confidence in Christianity.

The case of Professor Webster is somewhat difficult to

classify with reference to the motive that led to the commission of the crime. If his confession be taken as absolutely true, it must be assigned to the category of blind, ungovernable rage, and this disposition has generally been made of the matter. It must be remembered, however, that in making this confession, he was striving to save his life, hence his statements must be taken with a liberal allowance on that score. Besides, three weeks before, he had addressed a petition to the same tribunal in which he most emphatically asserted his entire innocence. There are many critical people, who, after having carefully examined this most remarkable case, have concluded that the murder was deliberately planned by Professor Webster. Several things point to the accuracy of this conclusion A day or two before the homicide, and after the appointment had been made for a meeting on that fated Friday afternoon, he had instructed the janitor to bring him about a quart of human blood from the hospital, saying that he wanted it for some experiment. This would point to an excuse for the presence of blood about his premises. Dr. Webster was a good-natured man, never known to give way to rage; indeed, he was a man of most even temperament, and it hardly seems probable that he would so far lose all self-control, because rather harshly dunned for the payment of a just debt, long past due, as to kill a man who had, on many occasions, stood his friend. Again, his systematic efforts to dispose of the remains and to throw suspicion upon Littlefield, the janitor, make strongly against the theory that the act was the result of uncontrollable rage. Another point in support of this theory is found in the circumstance that he told his ticket agent the morning of the murder that he had paid Dr. Parkman.

So manifold are the passions that sway the human heart, and so contradictory the actions of man, that it is impossible to more than conjecture what the real cause of this homicide was. The case had a most salutary effect upon the criminal practice of Massachusetts, and the entire country as well. Circumstantial evidence, while still closely scanned and carefully weighed, is received with more favor by courts and juries than before the trial and conviction of John W. Webster.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEARING MASSACRE AND DRUSE MURDER

The intricacies and contradictions of the human heart are past finding out. Shakespeare indicates extremes of human action when he makes Hamlet say: "To kill a king and marry with his brother." But what shall we say of a man who will deliberately murder eight people—every one his friend—and then proceed to feed the horses and pigs lest they become hungry before the crime is discovered? How are we to classify a monster who dashes out the brains of an infant barely old enough to lisp its mother's name, and then proceeds to throw corn to the chickens? Upon what theory are we to judge a rational creature, who, having done all these things for a few paltry dollars, when detected longs to atone for his crimes and wishes that he might die eight times—once for each life he has taken?

In 1866, there lived on what was then known as Jones' Lane, in the first ward of the city of Philadelphia, a family named Dearing, consisting of Christopher Dearing, his wife Julia, and five children, ranging in age from ten years to fourteen months. Although, strictly speaking, within the limits of the city, the house of the Dearing family was really in the country. The land was utilized for farming, and the nearest house was some two hundred yards distant. Near the small house was a barn in which was kept a horse and pig. Dearing tilled some land surrounding his house, but his real business was that of buying cattle, which occupied most of his time. In this enterprise he had a partner, who supplied the necessary capital, the profits being equally divided. In the fall of 1865 a young German, Anton Probst by name, had applied to Mr. Dearing for work, and had been given employment. Mrs.

Dearing did not like his actions, and he was discharged after living in the house about three weeks. The following February he returned and asked Mr. Dearing to re-employ him, which, in the natural kindness of his heart, the latter did.

On Wednesday, the 11th of April, 1866, a neighbor from whom Mr. Dearing was in the habit of borrowing newspapers remarked that something must be wrong at Dearing's, as none of the children had been sent for papers since the preceding Friday. He remarked also that he had seen no one moving about the premises for some days. Accordingly, he walked over to the Dearing house, which he found untenanted. Proceeding to the barn he discovered the horses almost dead from thirst, while the pig was so weak as to be unable to rise. Having cared for the animals he returned to the house, and looking through a window saw that everything inside was in the utmost disorder. Thoroughly alarmed, he went for a relation, who, entering the barn, saw a stocking projecting from a pile of hay. This was found to contain a human foot. The horrified men at once summoned further assistance, and a systematic search was instituted. In the barn, covered with hay, were found seven human bodies; those of Mr. and Mrs. Dearing, their four children and a young lady, Miss Elizabeth Dolan, of Burlington City, N. J. The bodies of the children were ranged beside that of the mother, that of the infant being laid upon her breast. The head of each had been crushed in with a blunt instrument of some kind, their throats being horribly gashed, presumably by an axe. A boy named Cornelius Carey, who had been employed about the little farm, working with Probst, was also missing. The following day, his dead body was found beside a hay-rick, some three hundred yards from the house. He had been murdered in precisely the same manner as the others, and his body likewise covered with hay.

Of the five children of the murdered parents, the eldest, Willie Dearing, alone escaped. This was not due to any temporary feeling of humanity on the part of the murderous wretch. The boy had been sent over the Schuylkill to visit his grandfather, and thus became the sole survivor of the ill-

fated family. But there are compensations in death as well as in life, and another victim had taken his place. The family of Miss Dolan, of Burlington City, N. J., were friends of the Dearings, and Elizabeth was in the habit of visiting them. On the day of the murder, Saturday, April 7th, she came to Philadelphia on a steamboat. Mr. Dearing was expecting her, but missed her at the wharf. He seems, however, to have overtaken her, as the two reached his home in the buggy together, where the murderer, armed with his death-dealing axe, was anxiously, eagerly, awaiting his employer's arrival.

The public had barely recovered from the shock of a most brutal murder committed at Germantown, near Philadelphia, and the horrible details of the Dearing massacre threw the community into a state of almost uncontrollable excitement. Not only that; the news was flashed around the globe and sent a thrill of horror through the universal heart of civilized man. The murderer, or murderers—as at first it was not thought possible that one man could have perpetrated the wholesale crime—had ransacked the house, taking every article of value, overlooking nothing. Even the boots and clothing of the murdered man had been carried away. Some of Probst's clothing was found upon the premises, and as no one in the neighborhood had seen him since the preceding Friday, he was strongly suspected. The police were at once called in and began a systematic search for the supposed murderer.

His movements were traced from one low resort to another. It was learned that he had sold one of Mr. Dearing's revolvers to a saloonkeeper, and one of his watches to a jeweler. On the Thursday after the murder, a police officer came upon a man in the neighborhood of Twenty-third and Market streets, one of the populous portions of the city. His appearance did not tally with the description of Probst, but he engaged him in conversation and became suspicious. As the district attorney, in his opening address upon the trial, rather strongly put it: "With no other guide than the God-given instincts which detect murder, they saw a man whom they were, as by a divine impulse, compelled to arrest." At the police station he was searched, and various articles belonging

to the Dearings found in his possession. More than that; he was then wearing the boots he had taken from the murdered man, and several articles of his clothing. Probst made no resistance, or even protest, but seemed rather relieved than distressed at his apprehension.

On April 25th, within three weeks of the fearful massacre, Anton Probst was placed on trial for the murder of Christopher Dearing, the other seven indictments being held over against him. The prisoner entered a plea of not guilty. He wished to offer no defense, but the court appointed two able attorneys to represent him. The trial occupied several days. The district attorney presented the case, depending entirely upon circumstantial evidence, yet absolutely overwhelming in its completeness. Probst had made many damaging admissions, amounting almost to a confession, but nothing of this was introduced in evidence, the case being regarded as amply strong without it The defense introduced no witnesses. Probst's attorneys admitted that the property of the murdered man had been found upon the prisoner, but argued that he might have robbed them and some one else have murdered them afterwards. Their only real defense was the inherent weakness of circumstantial evidence. Upon his arrival in New York from Germany, in 1863, Probst, who at that time was only twenty-one years old, had immediately enlisted in the Union army. He deserted several times, and became a professional "bounty jumper." His counsel attempted to secure the sympathy of the jury by representing him as an ex-soldier. Commenting on this in his closing address to the jury, the district attorney, in vigorous and eloquent terms, denounced Probst and protested against the honored and honorable title of soldier being applied to the murderous wretch. These sentiments appear so just that we quote a few lines.

"He a soldier! By killing Cornelius Carey alone he forfeits the name of soldier He a soldier! The man who carries innocent children into a barn and kills them with as little remorse as if he was a farmer cutting the throats of chickens to take them to market!

"He a soldier! that would murder these innocents, cut off

their little fingers, strip off their little aprons, and walk coolly to the house made desolate by his horrid crime, and coolly wipe his hands upon the baby's garments!

"A soldier! A man against whose brutality none are safe—a man who murders young and old, spares neither age nor sex, and hurries into eternity, by dashing out their brains and cutting their throats, such innocent beings as the Master spoke of when he said, 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'

"Gentlemen, I honor the name of soldier, and I trust that when Anton Probst is spoken of hereafter, when his name shall have been recorded in the criminal annals of the country, the vile, brutal, murderous wretch will be there known, not as Anton Probst the soldier, but as Anton Probst the murderer—the felon who waded so deep in human blood, that history has failed and futurity will fail to produce a fellow to him."

After being out only twenty minutes the jury returned a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree. On May 1st, Hon. Joseph Allison, the presiding judge, in a most eloquent and feeling manner, pronounced the death sentence upon Anton Probst.

After his conviction, Probst made two confessions, which substantially agreed. The last one was made in the presence of the chief of detective of police, and several reporters. It was attested by John P. O'Neil and John A. Walbert, the prisoner's attorneys, both of whom were also present. This confession tallied closely with the facts as worked out by the prosecution, and was undoubtedly substantially true. As it furnishes a succinct history of this most remarkable and atrocious crime, it is given here, in its entirety.

"Being desirous of making a full and true confession, I request my counsel to take down in writing the particulars of my motives, and of the manner attending the murder of the Dearing family. Being in bad health, I went to the Almshouse Hospital on the first of December, A. D. 1865, and, suffering for want of money, I, whilst there, conceived the design of robbing Mr. Dearing when I should leave the hospital and return to his farm.

"Sometime in the month of February, about the 24th, I left the hospital, and returned to the Dearing farm about the 2d of March. I returned with the view of robbing Dearing, and I was constantly watching my opportunity, up to the time of the murder; I did get opportunities, but my heart failed me.

"On the Saturday morning of the murder, about nine o'clock, I formed the design of killing the entire family. I was in the field by the hay-stack, it was there I made my mind up; Cornelius was with me. He was helping me put the wood on the cart to take it up to the barn; the axe with which I killed him was in the cart. I took the axe from the cart, and Cornelius and I went under the tree about one hundred yards below the stack; it was raining a little at the time, and we went there for shelter Cornelius sat down, I stood up and got behind him; three or four times I attempted to strike as he turned his head away, but I could not; at last I struck as his face was turned from me; the blow was on the left side, over the ear; then he fell over, not speaking a word; after he fell over, I gave him some blows on the head—one or two, I can't tell—when I turned the sharp part of the axe around, which had been sharpened two days before that for cutting the trees; with it I chopped him in the neck two or three times; he bled a great deal here, and I think the blood must be on the tree yet; I used the big axe to kill him After I killed him I lifted him upon the cart and pulled him over to the hay-stack, where I put him in the side away from the house, and covered him up with hay; I put the axe in the cart; it had blood on it; I went then with the horse and cart to the house; this was about ten o'clock. Before I killed Cornelius, I looked all around to see if any one was near who could discover me, but I saw no one. After I had killed Carey, and before I started to the house, I threw a little wood on the cart.

"When I reached the yard, I took the wood off the cart and left it with the cart on the side of the machine house; then I went in the stable and took with me the big axe, the little axe, and the hammer which I fixed there for the purpose of killing the family. I put them all at the corner of the door, so as they would be handy to me, for I intended to kill all in the

stable; there was blood on my pants, which I brushed off as well as I could with hay, and after that I went to the house. The children, including the baby, were all in the house, but Mrs. Dearing was down to the ditch on the left side of the house getting water; she had a pail with her. I told Johnny, the oldest boy, I wanted him to come over to the stable to help me. I went over before him, and he followed right after me. Before he came in I picked up the little axe in the right hand and concealed it down by my leg and walked down toward the crib; John walked behind me until he came to the passage-way that leads between the stalls, when he turned into the passage-way to the left; then I hit him from behind just as he turned; he fell down immediately; he never spoke a word; then I chopped him in the neck with the sharp end of the axe two or three times. I then carried the body over to the crib, and laid it there just by the door; when I crept in and pulled the body in by the shoulders; I laid it in the corner and covered it up with a little hay. I took a little hay then and wiped the hatchet off, and laid it down with the hammer and the axe where I put them first, on the left-hand side as you go in the stable.

"Then I went to the house again, and told Mrs. Dearing, who was then engaged in doing something about the stove, that the young horse was loose in the stable, and I could not tie it myself, and asked her to come and help me. I then went over to the stable; I took the axe as I walked in and went down to the place where I killed John. Mrs. Dearing followed me in one or two minutes, and walked up to the passage-way, where I killed John. As she turned to the left to go down I struck her with the axe on the right side of the head. She fell outside; John fell inside. I then gave her two or three blows on the head, when I turned around the sharp part of the axe and chopped her two or three times in the neck. I then dragged her to the crib in which the bodies were found, and got her in just like I got Johnny in, and covered her up with hay.

"Then I took the blood off the axe with hay, and put it back in the same place with the hammer. I went back to the

house and told Thomas his mother wanted to see him in the stable; he went right over with me and went in the door first; I walked behind him and picked up the axe; he walked back into the entry till he got within two or three feet this side of where I killed the others, when I hit him on the head with the little axe, from behind, on the left side; he fell down and I gave him one or two more in the head, and I turned the sharp side and chopped his throat two or three times; then I brought him in the crib like the others and covered his body up with hay; I left the little axe in the same place that I killed him; I stood it up against the boards; I had no need to hide it any more. Then I went in the house again and told Annie, 'Your mother wants to see you over in the stable.' She walked over before me, and I lifted up the little baby and carried it over in my arms; Annie went in the stable; I walked behind her; she walked right through to the place where the others were killed; when I came in I left the little baby, and put him sitting up against the board in the corner on the left side; then I went over to Annie, picked up the little axe, and as she was looking around for her mother I hit her on the left side of the head with the axe; then she fell down, and I chopped her with the sharp part of the axe. I let her lay there, and I went over for the baby, and I brought it over on the same place; I stood him down, when I took the axe and gave him one on the forehead; he fell; then I took the sharp side of the axe and chopped his throat; then I carried Annie and the baby both together into the crib, and covered them up with hay; then I took the axes and cleaned them off with hay. I left the little axe and the hammer in the same place; then I took the new axe and washed it in the ditch, and brought it over to the house and set it up against the bench right outside of the kitchen door; then I went into the house, and went into the kitchen; I stayed there and in the back room all the time until Mr. Dearing came back; it took me, I guess, about half an hour to kill the family, and I then went in the house to wait for Mr. Dearing to come home; I stayed in the back room and the kitchen all the time. I waited there until about one, or half-past one o'clock, when I

saw Mr. Dearing coming along the road; I saw Miss Dolan was in the wagon with him.

"I went out and stayed by the kitchen door. He then drove in; he came by the Old Point House road; Mr. Dearing stepped out of the carriage, and I asked him if he would go over in the stable; I told him there was a sick steer there; I said, 'He looks pretty sick, you can tell pretty near; I want you to come over and see him.' He then went right over with me in the stable, and Miss Dolan went into the house; this was before the horse was taken from the carriage; he left the horse and wagon stand there; he walked sharp over in the stable, and I walked behind him; he went in the stable, and I picked up the axe in my hand from the corner where I left it; I walked behind him to the middle of the stable; I struck him one on the head on the left side with the small axe; he fell right down on his face; he did not speak; I then turned him over, gave him two more, when I cut him with the sharp edge of the axe in the throat; I put a little hay over him and went out of the stable. Miss Dolan stood outside the house and hallooed for me; she said: 'Anton, come put the horse out.' I said: 'Mr. Dearing wants to see you in the stable.' She had been in the house and taken her things off; she took them upstairs, and laid them on the bed; she then went over about half-way; she asked me, 'Where is Mrs. Dearing and the children?' I told her: 'They are all over in the stable.' She then walked in the stable and I walked behind her; I then took the hammer, the little axe was in the corner where I left it after killing Dearing; when she was in five or six feet I knocked her down by hitting her on the right side of the head with the hammer; she fell on her face like Mr. Dearing. When she fell down I turned her around quick and gave her one more with the hammer, then I took the little axe and cut her throat; I chopped her three times, I guess. Then I shut the door; then I went and put the hay from Mr. Dearing and took his watch and his pocketbook; then I put them in my pocket; then I went and looked what Miss Dolan had; I found a pocketbook in her pocket, and I put it in my pocket.

"I then took Mr. Dearing by the shoulders and dragged

him over to the corner where he was found; then I took Miss Dolan the same way and laid her beside him and covered them up with hay. Then I went out of the stable and shut the door, and went over to the carriage, took the gears off the horse and put him in the stable; I gave him plenty of hay, oats and corn. I then shut the stable door and went over to the house and put the wagon beside the shed; then I went in the house and looked how much money I got; I looked first in Dearing's pocketbook, and I found ten dollars in greenbacks, two two-dollar notes and one three-dollar note, that was the counterfeit note they had at the court; the two-dollar notes were counterfeits; I got all the money from the big pocketbook and left it at the house; then I looked in Miss Dolan's pocketbook and there was not one cent in it, but there was some postage stamps; I left the money and watches and pocketbook on the table, and fastened the door of the house; then I went upstairs and looked every place for money.

"I found a pocketbook in the bed; there was three dollars and sixty or sixty-five cents; this was in Mr. Dearing's bed; I found them two revolvers that were in court in the same bed under the ticking; I took them downstairs, and I went upstairs again, and looked all over in every place. I could find no more money; then I took three shirts, and a pair of pants, and took them downstairs and dressed myself in the back room. I washed myself before this in the kitchen, in a basin.

"I shaved myself with Mr. Dearing's razors, the same as were in the carpet-bag; I took all my beard off; this was before I washed myself; I dressed myself in Mr. Dearing's shirt and pants, then I ate some bread and butter, and then I went upstairs again, and looked all over for something, and took all the things that I got in my carpet-bag; then I rolled up my bloody clothes and put them under the blanket on my bed where I slept; then I went downstairs and stayed there, and fed the dogs and chickens and everything with the salt beef.

"I fed the chickens with oats and corn; I then went in the house and stayed there thinking it all over; I thought what I

should do after killing so many people, and got so little money. I waited then for the evening; I went upstairs a couple of times more looking for money, but got no more than I have stated. About six and a half o'clock I left, having shut fast all the doors and one window on the south side, and got out through the front window on the porch; I then went through the meadow to the house where he kept the cattle, and opened the door so as the cattle could get in and eat some hay, as there was plenty there; I then came to the city by Jones' lane; one of the dogs came with me; he would not leave me; he followed me to Third Street; then I got into one of the Third street cars and saw the dog no more; he would not leave me till I got into the car; I got off the cars at Callowhill street and walked to New Market, and went to Leckfeldt; he, in his testimony on the trial, told what took place there.

"I next went to Hoover's in Front Street, and stayed there about half an hour; then I went to the Germantown road to a lager beer saloon, remained there about three hours, and returned to Hoover's, where I remained all night. The testimony given on trial as to my whereabouts was correct.

"When I was arrested I was making my way to the country; I had no particular place, but thought the best way to escape was by West Philadelphia. The reason why I said that I had an accomplice was because I was afraid of being lynched and that the police force could not save me.

"My only motive was money. I killed the boy so as he could not tell on me; I killed the two oldest children so as they would not afterwards identify me; I killed the two youngest, as I did not wish to leave them in the house alone without some one to care for them; I had no ill feeling to any one of the family; Cornelius and I were good friends.

"I had no accomplice, and I desire no one to be accused of the crime; I named one as Ganther, because I had heard frequently that name in the army; I never committed murder before, nor had I ever stolen a cent from any one.

"After I killed the boy, my mind was so that I would have killed any one who would have come upon the farm, and from whom I'd fear detection. I acknowledge the justness of my

fate, and feel sorry for my crime, but bad company and bad habits led me step by step to the foulest of all crimes.

"The above confession is made with the full knowledge of my approaching execution, and contains nothing but what is absolutely true. "ANTON PROBST."

Probst was executed on June 8, 1866. He met his fate with almost the personification of resignation. The officials who carried into effect the sentence of the court, the attorneys in the case, the attendant clergyman and the legal witnesses all agreed in declaring that Probst died with every appearance of willingness. He announced that he actually longed for the hour to come when his life was to be taken. That he was sincere in these protestations, can hardly be doubted. He had made two full and complete confessions in which he set forth his hideous crime without the smallest effort at palliation or excuse. That he would die speaking or acting a deliberate lie seems highly improbable, since he had nothing to gain by it.

The execution was one of the most orderly ever reported. The sheriff officiated in person, instead of thrusting the disagreeable task upon one of his younger subordinates, as is usually the case. The body was delivered to the Jefferson School of Medicine for dissection. The mounted skeleton may still be seen in the museum of the college.

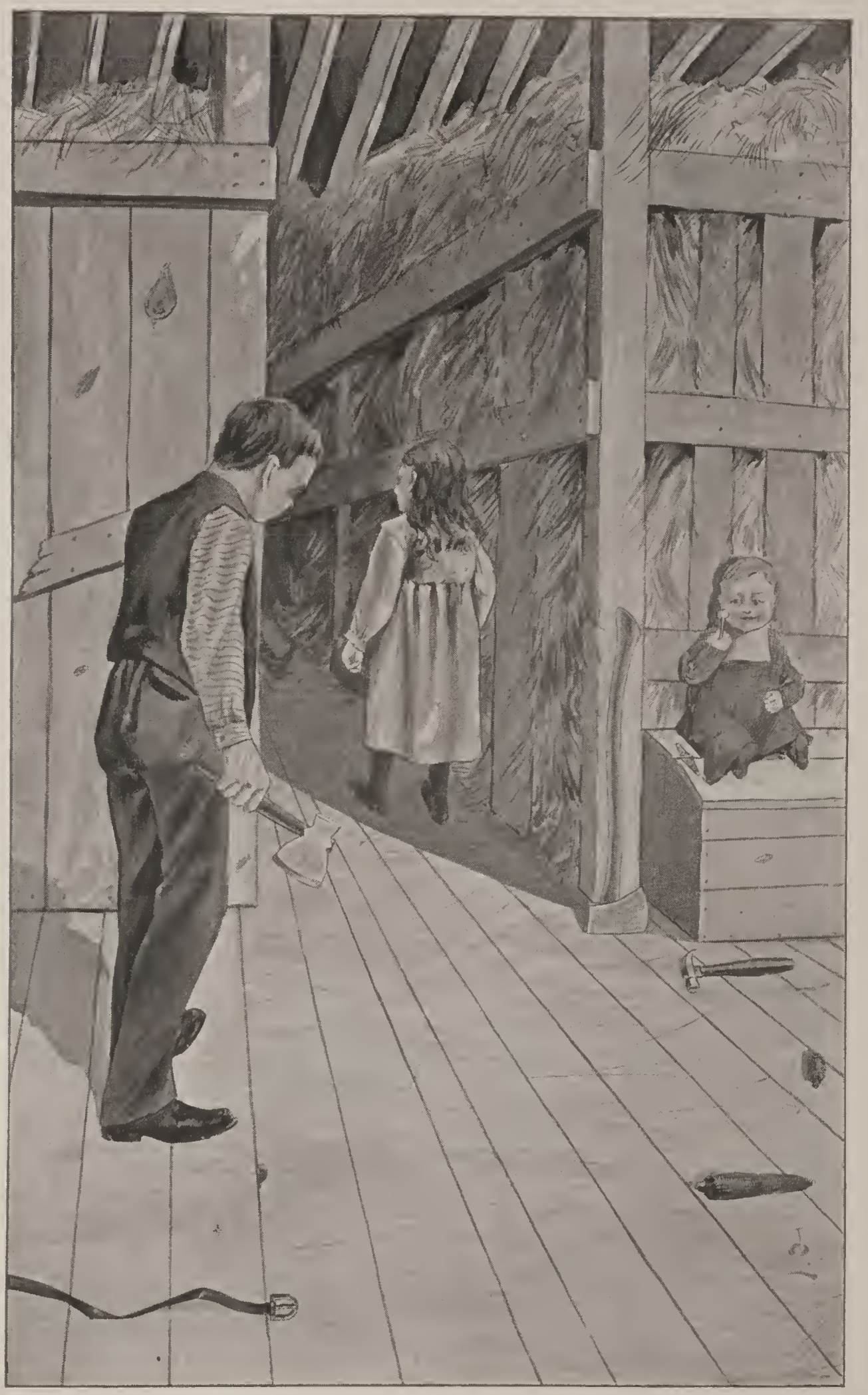
In the outset we asked how such a case was to be classified, and the answer is exceedingly difficult to give. The motive was clearly cupidity. Mr. Dearing often had in his possession considerable sums of money belonging to his partner in the cattle-buying business, which he used, very imprudently, to count in the presence of his hired man. Probst himself says that this excited his cupidity, and that he returned there the second time with the one idea of stealing money. Unable to secure it in the manner he had first planned, the idea of murder presented itself to his mind. This he probably combated for a time, though doubtless at the first suggestion he knew in his heart that he would carry it into execution. Ghastly and brutal as it was, his plan of procedure showed considerable ingenuity, and in no other way, probably, could he have

accomplished such a wholesale slaughter without an alarm being given.

Although these terrible crimes were committed from motives of cupidity, the existence of the homicidal impulse is clearly manifest. In his confession he says: "I returned with the view of robbing Dearing, and I was constantly watching my opportunity, up to the time of the murder; I did get opportunities, but my heart failed me." If he had not the heart to rob his friend and benefactor, how did he acquire the disposition and courage to kill him and his entire family as a preliminary to theft, if not from the operation of this fiendish impulse? It is seen in his plan, outlined in his mind to the most minute details, in forming which he appears to have experienced a sort of diabolical pleasure; in the circumstance that he slew an infant whose life he might, with perfect safety to himself, have spared, and in his own statement that after he had killed young Carey, he would willingly have taken the lives of any and all who presented themselves. He seems to have become almost literally intoxicated with crime, and to have fairly gloated over the flow of blood. If ever the devil took possession of a human being, he entered into the heart of Anton Probst and urged him on to the awful deed. In his confession, the murderer claimed that he had never stolen anything. When it is remembered that he was a "bounty-jumper," one of the most despicable kind of thieves, it is evident that Probst's ideas of honesty were of a somewhat peculiar kind.

That a sane man, as Probst undoubtedly was, without reaching the climax of crime by a long series of criminal indulgences, should have deliberately committed such a deed, almost surpasses human belief, and suggests that he was the victim of some form of moral disease, if such a condition be indeed possible.

Probst declared that he expected to be arrested and felt relieved in a manner when he found himself within the strong grasp of the law. This is not at all unlikely. He had spent the paltry pittance for which he had sacrificed eight lives, his impulse to kill had been satiated, and a revulsion of feeling



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might well have been anticipated. His final repentance and ardent profession of religion, were likewise in the same line. That he died believing himself a Christian, seems certain, yet whether his reformation would have proved permanent, had he been permitted to live, may well be doubted. That he did not long maintain the fearful malice that swayed his heart on that eventful 7th day of April, would seem to argue that the opposite emotions would have proved of brief duration.

His repentance is the only thing that removes him from the category of total depravity. Taken for all in all, this volume, which deals with homicide, does not contain a more complete instance of an abandoned heart.

Anton Probst was led to commit the most atrocious crimes of the century through the indulgence of his lowest passions. In his confession he ascribes his awful downfall to bad habits and evil company. If there be implanted within the heart of every son of Adam, as seems quite probable, a germ which may be released from the shell where it lies encysted and drive one to murder, we cannot be too careful how we indulge those passions that weaken the forces which hold it in control.

As already suggested, many homicides are committed as a result of motives so commingled and confused as hardly to be subject to classification. Other murders must be charged to motives which, while clear and distinct, not only do not fall within the brief category we have given, but seem entirely inadequate to account for the commission of the crime. In such cases, a careful analysis will usually show that the visible and definable motive was vigorously reinforced, if not absolutely supplanted, by the presence and uncontrolled action of the homicidal impulse. Such an instance occurred in Herkimer county, New York, in the latter part of 1889. In atrocity, it almost equals the case of Anton Probst, and bears a marked resemblance to that of Dr. Webster, so far as the means employed to dispose of the body were concerned.

Near the city of Little Falls, New York, amid scenes of the picturesque beauty presented by the romantic defile through which the historic Mohawk tumbles noisily down, there lived, in 1889, a family named Druse. It consisted of four members;

John Druse, the husband and father, Roxana, his wife, Mary, a daughter of about twenty, and a son of eleven or twelve years. The family occupied a small tract of land of little value, and were in moderate circumstances. John Druse was a man quite advanced in life, being nearly seventy years of age and the senior of his wife by some twenty-five years. Without being absolutely feeble, he was by no meaus vigorous, but was able to do some work. In the fall of the year there was little to be done upon the place, but he attended to the stock, and was almost constantly seen busying himself about the little farm. He had lived there for many years, and was quite widely known and universally well liked and respected. This feeling on the part of the neighbors did not extend to his wife, Roxana, who was a woman of low antecedents, and exceedingly disagreeable temperament. She was the absolute ruler of the household, and held her husband in a state of subjection amounting at times to absolute terror. Without being an idiot, Mary, the daughter, was feeble-minded, although well understanding the distinction between right and wrong. The little boy was possessed of ordinary intelligence.

The section where the Druse family lived was divided up into small holdings, and hence rather thickly populated. Early in November of the year mentioned, some of the neighbors noticed that the Druse house, a small structure, was kept tightly closed, in marked contrast to its usual appearance. At the same time, dense masses of black smoke were seen issuing from the chimney. This continued for two days, and, coupled with the circumstance that Mr. Druse was not seen about the premises, led to considerable speculation and not a little gossip among the farmers in the vicinity. At length some of the bolder, or more inquisitive, of the neighbors, repaired to the house and questioned Mrs. Druse as to the whereabouts of her husband. She answered all questions readily, and without the smallest appearance of embarrassment. She declared that he had gone on a visit to certain relatives of his in a distant part of the State. Questioned as to the time of his expected return, Roxana said she did not know; he would stay some time, and very possibly might not return at all.

This did not at all satisfy the inquisitors, but rather tended to increase their suspicions that something was wrong. John Druse had often mentioned these relatives, and a letter was written to them asking about him. A reply was soon received, answering that the missing man was not with his relatives and had not been heard from by them.

This information greatly increased the excitement in the neighborhood. The authorities were not communicated with, but certain individuals took the matter in hand and began an investigation. The little son of Roxana Druse was interviewed at length, and told enough to indicate clearly that a brutal crime had been perpetrated by his mother and sister. Warrants were procured and the two women locked up in the county jail. Upon her arrest, Mary Druse made a clean breast of the affair, and told of a crime whose details sickened the auditors, and the recollection of which still causes the people of the Mohawk valley to shudder with horror.

According to her story, which was never contradicted and was substantiated by that of her brother, Roxana Druse had grown weary of her husband. He was an amiable man, who had always treated her with the greatest kindness, but he was no longer very useful, and she foresaw that approaching age would soon render him entirely dependent upon his family for support. That she had come to personally dislike, if not positively hate, him, is probable, though this was largely problematical, since, from the day of her arrest until her death, she absolutely refused to speak a single word upon the subject. John Druse had been killed by his wife. The deed was done in the house and in the presence of her daughter, her son being at the time in another apartment. As he was in the act of entering a little pantry she came up behind him and struck him on the head with an axe, killing him instantly. She then proceeded, with fiendish coolness, to sever the head from the body, employing the axe for that purpose. On the trial of his mother and sister, the little boy testified that he saw his father's severed head resting on a platter in the pantry. All this, and what was to follow, was not the result of a sudden passion, but had been deliberately planned by the

depraved woman, who had discussed the matter with Mary for days and weeks before the plan was carried into execution.

The inhuman deed accomplished, the two women lost no time in carrying into effect their carefully matured scheme for disposing of the remains. And here the author would pause in the recital of this horrible crime to suggest that, in his own personal experience, as well as that of many others, it very frequently happens that homicides are detected through the unusual methods employed to hide from sight the remains of the murdered person. In this a devilish ingenuity is often exercised, which seems to argue that the parties concocting the plans had derived a certain pleasure from the operation. As already suggested, there is a peculiar though gruesome fascination about the details of murder mysteries, and, in the author's opinion, this often possesses the perpetrator of crime and leads him to exercise his inventive faculties that he may do something altogether out of the ordinary, when far safer, because simpler, means were available. But to return to the case in hand.

"Put on the wash boiler and fill it with water," was the command of the Jezebel-like woman, when she had completed the first act of the fearful tragedy. To clean up the blood-stains, the reader will think, and see nothing strange or unreasonable in that. To do that, probably, but principally to boil the body of the poor old man. Following their pre-arranged plan of procedure, the two women, under the management of the elder and dominating one, proceeded to dismember the body and place it in a large tin boiler. Here it was kept above a heavy fire until thoroughly cooked. This accomplished, it was removed and burned piecemeal in the kitchen stove, the old woman's idea being that the process of boiling would reduce to a minimum the odor of the burning flesh and bones. The consummation of this horrid plan occupied two full days, during which time the doors and windows of the farm-house were kept tightly closed. In the meantime, the tell-tale smoke and sickening smell were arousing the very suspicions the guilty woman hoped to avoid. The axe with which the deed was committed was found in a pond, where

Mary reported it had been thrown. The head was not burned, Roxana claiming that it would be unsafe to do so lest the odor of the burning hair might attract attention. She disposed of it herself, and as she refused to speak on the subject and Mary had not been told what was done with it, it was never discovered.

Practically no defense was offered, and the two women were promptly convicted. Mary Druse received a life sentence, and her mother was executed. She maintained a sphinx-like silence and ascended the scaffold with the same horrid composure she had employed while murdering her husband and disposing of his dead body by methods which, taken altogether, are almost without a parallel in the history of crime, and were hardly surpassed by the horrid acts of Luetgert, the sausage-maker.

This case is peculiar by reason of the absence of all those motives, some of which are usually present in all homicides. Roxana Druse had not led a criminal life, and no special wrong-doing had ever been charged against her up to the discovery of this most unnatural act, though her antecedents were bad. That she was possessed of the homicidal impulse, cannot be questioned. Undoubtedly, it was this that reinforced and supported her otherwise weak motive for putting her husband out of the way. Her method of concealing the crime makes strongly in the same direction. Had she sent the boy away, killed the old man and buried him carefully at night, giving out to the neighbors that he had left home as the result of a quarrel, declaring that he would never return, her dark deed might have gone undetected. Doubtless this plain, matter-of-fact method suggested itself to her morbid and perverted mind, but was rejected for one containing elements of unnatural excitement, from which she expected to derive positive pleasure. That her daughter became her willing tool and accomplice, is not at all surprising, since she may fairly be supposed to have inherited the natural disposition and homicidal impulse of her mother. Roxana Druse was disliked by her neighbors and acquaintances, yet among them all not one imagined her capable of the fiendish act she was clearly

proven to have committed. But all the time the germ was present, and a very insignificant motive served to suddenly develop it to a point where it became a most potent power for evil.

It seems not unlikely that in this case, the novel method for disposing of the body may have first suggested the crime to the mind of the depraved woman. Having heard, or conceived, the theory that boiled flesh gives out little odor when burned, it may have preyed upon her until it became an almost irresistible attraction, all-powerful by reason of its very gruesomeness. Such a conclusion presupposes the absence of all moral sensibility, coupled with a strong predisposition to take human life, which conditions were doubtless present in the miserable woman referred to. It is no answer to this suggestion to say that it means a reversal of ordinary methods of thought and action, for it applies only to those who are thoroughly perverted and depraved.

CHAPTER IX

CUPIDITY—BURKING—MAXWELL-PRELLER CASE

The term "burking" was derived from the name of William Burke, to whom belongs the awful notoriety of originating the business—we use the word business, for it became a veritable trade—of murdering human beings that he might dispose of their bodies as "subjects" for dissection in medical colleges. A more despicable calling than this could hardly be invented, or even conceived. The discovery of a long series of homicides, committed for this purpose, threw the civilized world into a state of horror and excitement and identified the name of the wretch with a crime, no instance of which has been brought to light within recent years.

The horrible events we are called upon to chronicle occurred in Edinburgh, in the year 1828. The residents of the metropolis of Scotland had long been greatly exercised over the sudden disappearance of people occupying the lower walks of life, of whom not the slightest trace was afterwards obtainable. Tramps, with whom Scotland was well supplied, appeared in Edinburgh, attracted for a few days the attention of the police and disappeared, without apparent reason, and as effectually as if they had been sunk in the ocean. Irish haymakers and farm laborers, on their way to work in the agricultural districts of the Lowlands, often vanished from the sight of their companions in Edinburgh, and no amount of searching revealed a trace of them. These people were all poor, many of them entirely penniless, and robbery could not have been the motive of their murder, if indeed they had been killed. The case that excited the widest and deepest interest was the disappearance from his accustomed haunts of a poor idiot, called Daft Jamie, who was widely known in the city.

As is quite well understood, the Scotch people have a soft place in their hearts for those who have been deprived of their just share of intelligence, and never molest or annoy, but always aid and encourage an idiot, or feeble-minded person. This incident aroused universal interest, revived the numerous stories of mysterious disappearances, and put the police upon a little more diligent inquiry.

Not long after this became public, toward the close of October, 1828, an Irish beggar, named Mary Campbell, who had long frequented certain localities, was suddenly missed. Although a poor woman, she had some friends who instituted an inquiry. At that time, as now, Edinburgh was justly celebrated for the excellence of the anatomical instruction furnished by its medical colleges, and a search was made among the various dissecting rooms of the city. Her remains were speedily found in the apartments of Dr. Knox, a distinguished anatomist, and were positively identified. An investigation by medical experts, as to the cause of her death, led to the conclusion that she had died from suffocation, which rendered it fairly certain that she had been murdered, since suffocation is rarely the cause of natural death.

The next step was to ascertain the person from whom the body had been purchased. At that time there was no legal provision by which subjects for dissection could be secured. Occasionally the remains of those executed were directed to be turned over to some medical college, but this afforded a very uncertain and entirely inadequate source of supply. This had led to, or at least greatly stimulated, the stealing of bodies, a practice openly encouraged by the professors of anatomy who had no other means of supplying the pressing demand. The long wars in which Great Britain had been engaged being terminated, an impetus was given to professional education, and the demand for subjects increased until it could not be supplied. Resurrectionists were everywhere busy, and yet students were often obliged to wait months for an opportunity to do their dissecting, without which they were not permitted to graduate.

For the successful practice of "burking" by its originator

and his accomplices, the medical men of Edinburgh were, no doubt, largely to blame. So eager were they to secure bodies that they asked no questions and made no very deep scrutiny as to how the one offered had been deprived of life. The defense of the doctors was that men who would steal bodies would lie, and hence there was no use in questioning them.

In the case of Mary Campbell, no difficulty was experienced in locating the person who had furnished the body. The porter of Doctor Knox, a man named Patterson, was well acquainted with William Burke, and a seeming partner of his named Hare, from whom the body had been secured, and from whom he had purchased many others. He stated that on November 1st, he had gone by appointment to a house occupied by Burke, in a low street. Here he met a Mrs. McDougal, who passed as the wife of Burke, and a Mrs. Laird, who was known as the wife of Hare. They had shown him the body of the mendicant, hidden under some straw, and he had purchased it, paying five pounds down and promising three pounds more if it turned out satisfactory.

As soon as the four people were arrested, a man named Gray, and his wife, poor people who were only temporarily in the city, called upon the police and made statements of a character most damaging to the accused persons. They had stopped at Burke's miserable quarters for the night, and had seen the entire party drinking and dancing together. In the morning they saw the dead body of Mrs. Campbell, and, terror-stricken, quitted the premises. The human trap—for it was nothing else—consisted of two rooms. Burke let out his dilapidated lodgings to such as were able to pay, and thus secured an opportunity to murder those he deemed fitted for the purpose, provided they were strangers in the city. In all this he was ably seconded by Hare, who seemed to have been fully as detestable as himself. When Hare found that the authorities had secured much evidence against the entire party he offered to make disclosures that would send his accomplice to the gallows, provided he was insured immunity from punishment. After some delay, the authorities decided to permit Hare to turn king's evidence, it being doubtful if they would

be able to secure a conviction against any of the accused unless this was done. Mrs. Laird was shown to have had no guilty connection with the matter, and she was discharged from custody.

On December 23, 1829, William Burke and Helen McDougal were put on trial for the murder of Mary Campbell, before the High Court of Justiciary, in Edinburgh. No trial during the present century, with the possible exception of that of William Palmer, has excited the people of Great Britain as this one did. The inhabitants of Edinburgh were almost frenzied and extra precautions were necessarily taken to prevent a jail-breaking and lynching. Hare lived up to his side of the bargain, and testified fully and completely. Mary Campbell had been suffocated by Burke, he declared. He entered into the most minute details of this and other cases. From the best evidence that could be obtained from Hare and the subsequent confession of Burke, it appears that they must have murdered and sold the bodies of at least thirty people. Some of the murders were committed in Burke's rooms, but generally they were perpetrated in the premises—literally a den—occupied by Hare. It appeared that Mrs. McDougal was never actually present when a murder was committed, and a "Scotch verdict" of "not proven" was entered in her case. Upon her release, she presented herself in her old haunts in the slums of Edinburgh, but being recognized, was set upon by the populace, and barely escaped with her life. After that she quitted the city, and was never again heard of.

Burke was convicted and sentenced to death. Then the question of releasing Hare arose, and was warmly discussed. The public of the entire kingdom clamored for his trial and death, but the court officers decided that they must stand by their bargain and give him immunity. When Hare learned that he was to be set free he exulted in the most extravagant manner, and nearly died from the effects of his emotions. It was known that if publicly released from the prison he would be torn in pieces by the enraged populace, so, after repeated consultations on the part of the authorities, he was allowed to quit the jail and the city unobserved. Like his many

victims, he disappeared from view and was never heard of afterwards.

After his conviction and sentence, Burke made a full and complete confession, which agreed in most particulars with the story told by Hare, and was doubtless substantially correct. Although of a revolting character, this account would hardly be complete without something touching the methods pursued by these inhuman wretches. We present the confession of Burke, substantially as given by Camden Pelham, Esq., barrister at law, in his report of this remarkable case.

Being asked how, having once been under religious influences and impressions, he had ever formed the idea of such cold-blooded, systematic murders, Burke replied that he did not exactly know; but that, becoming addicted to drink, living in open adultery and associating continually with the most abandoned characters, he gradually became hardened and desperate, gave up attending chapel or any place of religious worship, shunned the face of a priest, and being constantly familiar with every species of wickedness, he at length grew indifferent as to what he did, and was ready to commit any crime.

He was asked how long he had been engaged in this murderous traffic, to which he answered, "From Christmas, 1827, till the murder of the woman Campbell in October last." "How many persons have you murdered, or been concerned in murdering, during this time? Were they thirty in all?" "Not so many; not so many, I assure you." "How many?" He answered this question, but the answer was, for a reason perfectly satisfactory, reserved.

"Had you any accomplices?" "None but Hare; we always took care when we were going to commit murder that no one else should be present, that no one could swear he saw the deed done. The women might suspect what we were about, but we always put them out of the way when we were going to do it. They never saw us commit any of the murders. One of the murders was done in Broggan's house when he was out; but before he returned, the thing was finished, and the body put in a box. Broggan evidently suspected something, for he

appeared much agitated and entreated us to take the box away, but he was in no way connected with it."

"You have already told me that you were engaged in these atrocities from Christmas, 1827, till the end of October, 1828; were you associated with Hare all that time?" "Yes, we began by selling to Dr. —— the body of a woman who had died a natural death in Hare's house. We got ten pounds for it. After this we began the murders, and all the rest of the bodies we sold to him were murdered."

"In what place were those murders generally committed?" "They were mostly committed in Hare's house, which was very convenient for the purpose, as it consisted of a room and a kitchen; Daft Jamie was murdered there; the story told of his murder is incorrect. Hare began to struggle with him, and they fell and rolled together on the floor; then I went to Hare's assistance, and we finished him, though with much difficulty. I committed one murder in the country; it was in last harvest; all the rest were done in conjunction with Hare."

"By what means were these fearful atrocities perpetrated?" "By suffocation. We made the persons drunk, and then suffocated them by holding the nostrils and mouth, and getting on the body; sometimes I held the mouth and nose, while Hare knelt upon the body; and sometimes Hare did the holding while I placed myself upon the body. Hare has perjured himself by what he said at the trial about the murder of Campbell, he did not sit by while I did it, as he says, but was on the body, assisting me with all his might. We sometimes used a pillow, but did not in this case."

"Now, Burke, answer me this question; were you tutored or instructed, or did you receive hints from any one, as to the mode of committing murder?" "No, except from Hare. We often spoke about it, and agreed that suffocation was the best way; Hare said so, and I agreed with him. We generally did it by suffocation."

"Did you receive any encouragement to commit, or persevere in committing these atrocities?" "Yes, we were frequently told by Patterson that he would take as many bodies

as we could get for him. When we got one, he always told us to get more."

"To whom were the bodies so murdered sold?" "To Dr. ——. We took the bodies to his rooms, and then went to his house to receive the money for them. Sometimes he paid us himself, sometimes we were paid by his assistants. No questions were ever asked as to the mode in which we had come by the bodies. We had nothing to do but leave the body at his rooms and go and get the money."

"Did you ever, upon any occasion, sell a body or bodies to any other lecturer in this place?" "Never. We knew no other."

"You have been a resurrectionist, I understand?" "No, neither Hare nor myself ever got a body from a churchyard. All we sold were murdered, save the first one, which was that of the woman who died a natural death in Hare's house. We began with that; our crimes then commenced. The victims we selected were generally elderly people. They could be more easily disposed of than persons in the vigor of youth."

Of the truth of these monstrous disclosures there cannot be the smallest doubt. The general impression in Edinburgh was that in the beginning Burke had been a dupe of Hare's, who had practiced the same horrid trade before the two fell into companionship. It was this idea that made the people so frantic at Hare's escape.

Burke was executed on Wednesday, January 28, 1829. He was hooted by the populace while on the scaffold, and seemed anxious that the hanging be hurried that he might escape what must have been a fearful torture. Before his death he professed great contrition for his numerous crimes.

The fearful crimes of Burke and Hare were not without some compensation to the world. Burke was executed on January 28th, and on the 12th of the following month notice was given that the whole matter was to be brought before the House of Commons. This movement raised a veritable storm and the subject filled the newspapers to the exclusion of almost everything else. After much discussion the matter was permitted to rest in abeyance until the latter part of 1831,

when a similar occurrence again aroused the nation. This was in London. It had long been believed that such horrid things were done in that city, but no well authenticated instance of it had ever been brought to light.

On the 5th of November, 1831, William Hill, the porter at the dissecting room of King's College, London, answered a ring at the bell, and found two men at the door who said that they had a body to sell. These men, as afterwards appeared, were John Bishop and James May. After some dickering as to the price, the two men went away, but soon returned with a sack which contained the body of a boy about fourteen years of age. Hill noticed that it was fresh, that the hands were clenched, and that it had, in all probability, never been placed in a coffin. Hill saw Mr. Partridge, the demonstrator of anatomy, who decided that the men should be arrested. They were detained while change for a fifty pound note was obtained. In the meantime the police were sent for, and the two men taken into custody. A man named Thomas Williams was at once implicated in the affair, and the three were placed on trial. The evidence was very full and complete, leaving no apparent doubt as to the guilt of the three men, and they were convicted and sentenced to death.

After their conviction, Bishop and Williams made a full confession which exonerated May from any share in the murder. There had been elements of weakness in the case made against him, and he was accordingly released. The news almost cost him his life. He fell to the ground and was seized with convulsions. It was thought that he would surely die, but he finally recovered. The two guilty wretches admitted that they had murdered the boy. They had decoyed him to the house of Williams with the promise of giving him work. Having rendered him insensible by giving him a cup of rum, into which had been poured a quantity of laudanum, they took him into the yard, tied a rope to his feet and slid him into a well, where he was speedily drowned. In about three-quarters of an hour they drew the body out. The next morning, May came in and they all began drinking together. May was induced to go with Bishop to dispose of

the body. He seems to have had no knowledge that a crime had been committed, and was to receive no portion of the price, except repayment for the amount he had expended for liquor.

The two men confessed that they had murdered two other persons and sold their bodies for dissection. One, a woman named Fanny Pigburn, they killed in identically the same manner as they had the boy for whose murder they were convicted. They also murdered, for the same awful purpose, a boy named Cunningham. They adopted the same methods they had employed with the woman and the other boy. Bishop admitted that he had been a "body-snatcher" for twelve years, during which time he had disposed of from five hundred to one thousand stolen bodies, but that the three murders were all he had ever committed. May had been a "resurrectionist" for years, but seems to have been innocent of murder.

Bishop and Williams, the latter's real name being Head, were executed December 5, 1831. It was estimated that fully thirty thousand people had assembled to witness the act. The pressure was so great that many people were injured, some of them severely. Upward of twenty were carried to one hospital before half-past seven o'clock in the morning.

It was believed by the authorities that Bishop and Williams did not confess the full enormity of their crimes, and that many more murders could have rightly been laid to their charge. The number, however, was amply sufficient to arouse the nation, and Parliament speedily enacted a law by which unclaimed bodies in public institutions might be turned over to the anatomists for purposes of dissection. This at once solved the problem, "burking" disappeared, and "body-snatching" is almost unknown in Great Britain.

About the first of April, 1885, two men, young, intellectual looking, well dressed, and presenting in every regard a most respectable and prepossessing appearance, separately entered the Southern Hotel, St. Louis, and registered under the names of C. Arthur Preller and W. H. Lennox Maxwell. During the two weeks that they remained guests of the hotel,

they were much together, frequently inquired after each other and appeared to be on terms of the closest intimacy. All that the hotel people knew about them was obtained from Maxwell, who informed one of the clerks that Preller and himself were on their way to Auckland, New Zealand.

On Monday, April 15th, following Easter Sunday, Maxwell paid his bill and quitted the hotel. On the same day Preller disappeared. He had not paid his bill or surrendered his room, but this occasioned neither alarm nor suspicion. All hotel men know that guests, especially young men, are liable to absent themselves from their hotels, sometimes for days together; besides, Preller had every appearance of being possessed of wealth; he had displayed quite a sum of money, and had ample baggage in the house to secure the payment of his indebtedness. Several days passed without any suspicion being aroused. At length some of the guests and employés noticed a sickening odor which seemed to emanate from the room the absent man had occupied, and where his effects still remained. The door being opened, it was apparent that the stench proceeded from a large zinc trunk which stood in one corner of the apartment. It was at once carried downstairs and forced open. A glance convinced the horrified searchers that it was a case for the police. It contained the body of a man which was subsequently, though not without difficulty, identified as that of the missing guest, C. Arthur Preller.

The corpse, which was in an advanced stage of decomposition, was entirely nude, with the exception of an under garment, attached to which was a scrap of paper bearing in a bold, though apparently disguised hand, the words: "So perish all traitors to the great cause." A careful examination of the remains revealed no marks of violence, and, as it was evidently a case of murder, the conclusion reached by the police was that death had resulted from the administration of poison.

As a matter of course, but one theory could be entertained as to the identity of the murderer. The dead man's traveling companion at once fell under a suspicion, amounting almost to a certainty, that he was the man wanted. Maxwell had

several days' start of the officers, but, acting on the suggestion he had himself made that he and his comrade were bound for New Zealand, they at once communicated with the authorities in San Francisco, who instituted an immediate search, and, from the description that had been wired, speedily traced him to a hotel, where he had posed as a Frenchman, and registered under an assumed name. He had declined to converse in the French language, and this had raised suspicions against him. Further inquiry developed the fact that, under his assumed name, he had purchased a steerage ticket for Auckland, New Zealand. Upon the arrival of the vessel at Auckland, he was arrested and held to await the arrival of officers from St. Louis, who fully identified and brought him back to this country.

Upon his arrival in St. Louis, he strenuously denied that he was Maxwell, and maintained, as he had done in San Francisco, that he was a Frenchman. His accent, which was unmistakably Scotch, gave the lie to this assertion. When asked if he spoke French, he answered that he spoke a Norman dialect, but when some one present volunteered to converse with him in that dialect, he declined to say anything further on the subject. Finding himself unable to maintain the position he had assumed, and being confronted with some clothing found in his possession in New Zealand, which were marked "C. A. P.," the initials of Preller's name, he admitted that his name was Maxwell, and that he had come to the Southern Hotel at nearly the same time as Preller, but he strenuously denied that the murdered man was he.

In the meantime it had been ascertained that Maxwell, who was a physician by profession, though it appeared that he was merely traveling for pleasure, had, on Easter Sunday, purchased at a drug store in the neighborhood of his hotel, four ounces of chloroform, telling the clerk that he wished to use it in the performance of an operation he was about to undertake. It appeared that not long after making this purchase he had returned to the drug store and excitedly asked for two ounces more, which was given him. Confronted with this evidence, the accused admitted that he had purchased the

chloroform as reported, but denied that he had manifested any indication of excitement. This statement was sustained somewhat by his conduct in the hotel the evening following the death of Preller. Everything he had done and said indicated the most decided coolness. While eating a hearty supper he had conversed in an apparently light-hearted way with the waiter who served him, alluding laughingly to certain frolics in which he had recently been engaged.

Maxwell was indicted for the murder, but was not brought to trial until May, 1886, thirteen months after the discovery of the crime. In the meantime it was discovered that he had registered at the Southern Hotel under an alias, and that his real name was Hugh M. Brooks. His father, a reputable man of some wealth, hearing of the terrible predicament in which his son was placed, came from England to St. Louis, and employed able counsel to conduct his defense.

The State made a strong case against the accused, although the proof as to the identity of the body was a trifle weak. In the meantime strong efforts had been made to show that Preller was still alive, and had been seen at various points in the East. The press was filled with such reports, which, when run down, amounted to nothing tangible, but still served to increase the public interest in a case that had already attracted world-wide attention.

At length the day came when Brooks, or Maxwell, as he will continue to be called here, was to take the stand in his own defense. The courtroom was crowded to suffocation, and expectation was on tiptoe. There is always a morbid curiosity to listen to the confession or testimony of an accused murderer, and in the present case this was intensified by the circumstance that, during the long months he had lain in jail, not a word about Preller had passed his lips. He would converse freely and entertainingly on any other subject, but as to the crime of which he stood charged his lips were tightly sealed. In his testimony Maxwell was very guarded, and told a story upholding the theory already advanced in his defense. He maintained earnestly and with great show of candor that the death of Preller, which he acknowledged was due to

him, had been entirely accidental. His friend Preller, he explained, had long been afflicted with a disease of a private nature, and had requested the witness to treat him in a professional way. After consulting some medical authorities, he decided to put him under the influence of chloroform that he might conduct the necessary examination without pain to the patient. Accordingly, he went to a neighboring drug store and procured four ounces of the fluid. Before Preller was entirely unconscious, the witness accidentally overturned the bottle, and had been obliged to go hurriedly for a fresh supply. Returning, he continued to administer the anesthetic. when, suddenly, and to his utter consternation, he discovered that his patient was in a dying condition. He used every means in his power to revive the unfortunate man, but without avail, and in a few minutes his patient was dead.

Continuing, the witness stated that he was unacquainted with the laws of this country, and supposed that he could not be permitted to testify in his own behalf, in the event of his being put on trial for his life, as is the case in England. Accordingly he resolved to flee. He was some time, more than a day, in reaching this conclusion. In the meantime he had been drinking heavily, and was constantly under the influence of liquor. Before leaving his room, however, he had removed everything from his trunk and tumbled the body into it. Later he returned, opened the trunk, cut off the dead man's mustache, and wrote and placed the placard upon the corpse. This was about midnight. He spent the remainder of the night in the room with the dead body, but acknowledged that he did not sleep. He afterwards placed a pair of drawers upon the body, and made some superficial cuts on the breast with a scalpel. He did this, he averred, to puzzle the police after he had definitely determined to fly. As to why he did not have the trunk removed from the hotel and checked to some other city or town, Maxwell offered no explanation. He admitted that he took possession of the dead man's money, which, according to his statement, he did not count, but thought amounted to about six hundred dollars; when he reached St. Louis he had only about fifty dollars of his own.

In a certain way the defense offered for Maxwell was similar to that advanced in the famous case of Dr. John W. Webster, who was tried and convicted in Boston in 1850 for the murder of Dr. John Parkman, which is given in detail elsewhere in this volume. After his conviction Dr. Webster admitted the killing, but claimed that it was unintentional. He had attempted to conceal the evidences of his crime by burning the body. In both instances, the guilty men seem to have "lost their heads" and adopted courses that would never have occurred to them while in the calm possession of their faculties. It is the experience and the observation of the author that this often happens. Men who are amateurs in the commission of terrible crimes will often work up a case with consummate skill, and then, when the deed is committed, lose all self-control and do the most foolish things, calculated to make known their guilt. With hardened criminals, who have long pursued courses of crime, the case is generally different, and the cunning which planned the deed does not desert the perpetrators.

Maxwell, or more properly Brooks, although ably defended, was found guilty and sentenced to death. The most strenuous efforts were made to secure a commutation of his sentence, but without avail, and he paid, upon the scaffold, the penalty of his awful crime.

There is a wide difference of opinion as to whether he deliberately planned the murder; and had he promptly surrendered himself to the police and made to them the statement he gave upon the witness stand, he very probably would have escaped punishment. His concealment of the body and appropriation of the money of the murdered man, coupled with his subsequent flight, satisfied the jury that he was guilty as charged. His case must be classed with those committed from motives of cupidity. He was almost without money, and his friend was well supplied. Following the example set by millions of others, he basely murdered his companion and paid for the deed with his own life. In this case there was a literal fulfillment of the scriptural aphorism: "The wages of sin is death."

CHAPTER X

EUGENE ARAM

Larger in territorial extent than any two other counties of England, Yorkshire occupies almost the geographical centre of Great Britain, and lies nearly midway between London and Edinburgh. The northwestern portion of the county abounds in caverns, some of them of vast extent, and surrounded with most picturesque scenery. One of the smallest of all the caverns of Yorkshire has attracted greater attention than all the rest, for it was there that, in 1759, was discovered the skeleton of Daniel Clarke; the first step toward unearthing a murder mystery that for fourteen years had been hidden under the limestone rocks of St. Robert's Cave.

Of all the remarkable cases in the criminal annals of England, that of Eugene Aram has attracted the widest interest, which still continues with little abatement, notwithstanding the lapse of nearly a century and a half. Of an unusual character, surrounded with romantic incidents, long delayed in its discovery, depending largely upon circumstantial evidence and defended in a most remarkable and eloquent manner, the case we are about to narrate has proved an attractive theme for the pen of the poet, the dramatist and the novelist. Few who know anything of the history of crime, and a less number of those familiar with the literature of the world, are ignorant of this justly celebrated case. At the same time there are in print to-day very few accurate accounts of the life, crime, famous trial and tragic end of the renowned scholar and schoolmaster. As the author has more than once remarked, works of fiction contain much of general truth, though the separate details be of imaginative creation, and may well be used as illustrations of human action. At

the same time, one seeking to know the truth should not go to the pages of an historical novel to learn the facts of history. Actual occurrences are seldom entirely fitted for the uses of the story-teller, who accordingly exercises a large amount of license in twisting them to suit his purpose. Many good people base their biblical knowledge upon Milton's "Paradise Lost," and have obtained their "historical facts" from the pages of Dumas, Muhlbach and Scott. As to the case under discussion, this is peculiarly true, Lord Lytton's "Eugene Aram" having been generally accepted as a fair account, colored with romance and adorned with fancy, but none the less essentially accurate and reliable. This is very far from being true. An admirable and praiseworthy work, to be commended both from a literary and a moral standpoint, it makes something of a martyr of Aram, and is, in many regards, entirely misleading and deceptive.

Eugene Aram was born at Ramsgill, in Yorkshire, in the year 1704. His family was an old one, and, in remote times, had enjoyed considerable distinction. At the time of Eugene's birth, it had become greatly reduced, his father following the occupation of a gardener. While Aram was yet an infant, his family removed to the village of Shelton in the same county. When Eugene was six years old his father purchased a small cottage at Bradgate, near Rippon. Young Aram early manifested great intellectual ability and a decided thirst for knowledge. While yet a child, he attracted the attention of Sir Edward Blackett, a Yorkshire gentleman of letters, with whom the elder Aram was employed as a gardener. This kindly gentleman employed him as a personal attendant, and he lived for some time in an atmosphere of books and learning, devoting all his leisure moments to study. He became remarkably proficient in mathematics, and at the age of sixteen procured, through the kindly offices of Sir Edward, a position as bookkeeper with Mr. Christopher Blackett, a brother of the nobleman, who was engaged in business in London. This position soon grew distasteful to the young student, who had become weary of mathematics, and longed to perfect himself in the classical languages and literature,

He fretted under the restraint, but was speedily released. Being attacked with smallpox, he left London and returned to his father's house. Here, thanks to the liberality and self-denial of his worthy father, he was able to pursue a more systematic course of study than ever before, and soon gained considerable reputation as a rising scholar. After having served in various literary capacities in different parts of England, he was invited to the house of Mr. William Norton, of Knaresborough, in Yorkshire. Mr. Norton was himself devoted to study, and, being a man of wealth, gave the young man employment well suited to his literary tastes, and an opportunity to pursue his linguistic and other studies.

About this time Eugene Aram contracted a marriage, of which little is now known, but which does not appear to have been a very happy one. Not only did he afterwards desert his wife, but his untimely end was directly traceable to declarations, or more properly insinuations, of hers.

While in Knaresborough, Aram formed the acquaintance of two men, each destined to have a remarkable effect upon his subsequent life. One of these men was Richard Houseman, a dissolute and dishonest man, who lived principally by plying a trade that has not yet become obsolete, i. e., using his wits. He was a man of rather a low order, of little intellectuality and less education; one of the last in whose society a man of Aram's temperament, erudition and aspirations, would seem likely to find anything of pleasure or profit. At this time, however, our student seems to have begun to fret under the limitations placed upon him by the small means he had at command. Intellectual advancement and elevation, however desirable and praiseworthy, are none the less to be condemned when they excite feelings of cupidity and lead to dishonorable and criminal acts.

The other acquaintance of Aram was a shoemaker of Knaresborough, named Daniel Clarke. This man had recently married, and had given out that he expected to soon receive quite a fortune from wealthy relatives of his wife. In common with all the people of the town, Aram and Houseman heard this story, and made it the frequent subject of conversation.

Interviewing Clarke upon the subject, they learned that the story was true, but that the shoemaker was in a good deal of doubt as to whether the expected present would be forthcoming. Whereupon they suggested to him that if it failed it would be because he was poor, as the rich relatives of his wife would hardly give him any considerable sum of money so long as he appeared to be in indigent circumstances, since they would fear that he might squander it, as he had his own property. They suggested that he go to London, where he had acquaintances, and some credit with merchants, and purchase, on time, a large amount of silverware, jewelry, watches, etc. Whether in giving this advice Aram had any ulterior object in view has been doubted, and the truth cannot now be established. In any event, it was not long before Houseman and himself concocted a scheme to profit by the dishonesty of Clarke, who appears to have been a thorough rascal himself.

Clarke was overjoyed at the prospect of wealth that the suggestion afforded, and lost no time in carrying it into execution. He told the merchants in London that he wished to purchase the articles for export, and would pay for them as soon as he received a remittance. He thus secured possession of goods of great value, borrowed some articles from acquaintances, on some pretext or other, and returned with his booty to Knaresborough. His plan doubtless was to decamp with the plunder, if the promised fortune was not forthcoming in time to enable him to satisfy his creditors.

Shortly after his return home, the shoemaker and his newly acquired wealth suddenly disappeared. The facts as to his buying and borrowing the valuables speedily became public, and he was set down as a common swindler. In the meantime, Aram fell under suspicion. He had been quite intimate with Clarke for some months, and the seeming friendship of two men so entirely dissimilar in their habits of life and modes of thought had not failed to attract the attention of the gossips of the town. Houseman was also suspected, but he had left the country. A search of Aram's premises was ordered, and, buried in his garden, a considerable portion of the goods secured in London were found. The scholar was

brought to trial on the charge of having been a confederate of Clarke's in the swindling operation, and sharing in the proceeds. He was acquitted through lack of evidence, but his good name in Knaresborough was blasted.

Shortly after this, Aram disappeared, and nothing was heard of him, not even by his wife, for a period of fourteen years. As a matter of fact, he at once repaired to London, where he sold to a Jew as much of the plunder as he had managed to retain. This accomplished, he became an usher in Latin in the private school of the Rev. Mr. Plainblanc, in Picadilly, London. He remained some time in this place, but finally adopted a nomadic mode of life and pursued his vocation of teacher in different parts of England. All this time he seems to have pursued a regular course of study and had risen to considerable local distinction as a scholar. He had acquired quite a complete knowledge of botany, heraldry, Chaldean, Arabic, Welsh and Irish, and gathered much material for a proposed etymological word, to be entitled "A Comparative Lexicon of the English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Celtic Languages."

Aram and Houseman had brutally murdered Daniel Clarke that they might possess themselves of the property they had themselves persuaded him to fraudulently secure. Fourteen years had elapsed, and the matter was almost forgotten in Knaresborough, for no one had even suggested that the shoemaker had met with foul play, and an ordinary swindle takes no deep hold upon the memory of a community. If the perpetrator of a crime was ever justified in believing that all traces of his wrong-doing had disappeared, and that he was absolutely insured against its consequences, Eugene Aram surely was. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and sin finds out those who least expect or fear it. The weak things of this world oftentimes confound the wise.

In 1759, a laborer digging in a field near Knaresborough, unearthed the skeleton of a human being. Even in a city, such an occurrence excites curiosity and awe, but in a rural district it throws the people into something like a panic. The population went fairly wild over the gruesome discovery. All

sorts of theories were advanced by the knowing ones, but the opinion that the bones were those of Daniel Clarke gained the widest credence. Exactly why this should have been so is not apparent. It was universally believed that he had fled the country to avoid arrest, the punishment for swindling being, at that time, most severe. Aram's wife, who still resided at Knaresborough, threw out certain hints that decided the authorities to apprehend Houseman and the school-teacher. There was no clue to the whereabouts of the latter, but the former, after some considerable delay, was located in Scotland, and brought back to Knaresborough to be present at the inquest. Confronted with the bones, he became greatly perturbed, and upon being handed one of them by the coroner, he exclaimed, "This is no more one of Daniel Clarke's bones than it is one of mine." These words, coupled with the intensely earnest manner in which they were uttered, made a decided impression on all present. Why should Houseman so vehemently protest that the bones were not those of Clarke unless he knew that the body of the shoemaker had been deposited elsewhere? This question at once presented itself to the mind of the coroner, and he pressed it upon Houseman, who, realizing that he had made a mistake, became greatly confused, and finally broke down and confessed that he had seen Clarke murdered. He did not at first admit that he had been connected with the crime, but charged it upon Aram and a man named Terry. As to the body, he said that it had been buried in St. Robert's Cave. An excited crowd of people ran immediately to the romantic spot, and after searching for some time in the fragments of limestone that covered the floor of the cavern, came upon a human skeleton, minus the head. It was doubled up, and had obviously been buried in that position. Houseman now abandoned much of his first story, and admitted that he had been Aram's confederate. He denied that he had ever seen the body of Clarke after he was murdered, but stated that Aram had told him that the head was buried separately, and at some distance to the right of the body. Following this clue, a second search was made, which resulted in the discovery of a human skull.

A systematic search was immediately made for Aram, but it was some time before any trace of him was found. At last he was discovered at Lynn, in Norfolk, where he was an usher in a school. He was at once arrested, and conveyed to York Castle. On August 13, 1759, he was arraigned for trial before Mr. Justice Noel, under an indictment charging him with the murder of Daniel Clarke. The evidence was almost entirely of a circumstantial character, the only direct incriminating testimony being given by Richard Houseman, who had been allowed to turn king's evidence. He deposed that Aram and himself had formed a plot to rob Clarke, and that his accomplice had killed him. The three men were taking a walk together in the fields. It was bright moonlight, and Houseman, who was some distance behind the others, saw Aram strike down his companion. He averred that Aram concealed the body in St. Robert's Cave, and that they then proceeded to divide the property. He had carried his portion to Scotland, where he had disposed of it.

While the story of Houseman undoubtedly contained much of truth, he naturally did all that was in his power to shield himself at the sacrifice of his accomplice. That Aram was guilty is established by his own confession, written the night preceding his execution, but without this, the fact might well be doubted. The testimony of a self-confessed murderer ought to be taken with a great deal of allowance, and circumstantial evidence should be thoroughly sifted and diligently compared before it is permitted to secure a sentence of death. One peculiarity of the Aram case and that which, more than anything else, has caused it to take a prominent place among the remarkable criminal cases of England, and the world, is the circumstance that he conducted his own defense, and did it in such a masterly way as to well-nigh secure his acquittal, and give to his personality a lasting earthly prominence. His address to the court and jury is a masterpiece in its way, and strongly shows the inherent weaknesses and the dangers attending upon the introduction of circumstantial evidence. Besides, it conveys a good idea of the case, as proven in court. It is presented here, almost entire.

"My lord," began Aram, "I know not whether it is of right, or through some indulgence of your lordship, that I am allowed the liberty at this bar, and at this time, to attempt a defense; incapable and uninstructed as I am to speak. Since, while I see so many eyes upon me, so numerous and awful a concourse, fixed with attention, and filled with I know not what expectancy, I labor, not with guilt, my lord, but with perplexity. For, having never seen a court but this, being wholly unacquainted with law, the customs of the bar, and all judiciary proceedings, I fear I shall be so little capable of speaking with propriety, that it might reasonably be expected to exceed my hope, should I be able to speak at all.

"I have heard, my lord, the indictment read, wherein I find myself charged with the highest of human crimes. You will grant me, then, your patience, if I, single and unskilful, destitute of friends, and unassisted by counsel, attempt something, perhaps, like argument in my defense. What I have to say will be but short, and that brevity may be the best part of it.

"My lord, the tenor of my life contradicts this indictment. Who can look back over what is known of my former years, and charge me with one vice—one offense? No! I concerted not schemes of fraud—projected no violence—injured no man's property or person. My days were honestly laborious—my nights intensely studious. This egotism is not presumptuous—it is not unreasonable. What man, after a temperate use of life, a series of thinking and acting regularly, without one single deviation from a sober and even tenor of conduct, ever plunged into the depths of crime precipitately, and at once? Mankind are not instantaneously corrupted. Villainy is always progressive. We decline from the right—not suddenly, but step after step.

"If my life in general contradicts the indictment, my health at that time, in particular, contradicts it yet more. A little time before, I had been confined to my bed—I had suffered a long and severe disorder. The distemper left me but slowly, and in part. So far from being well at the time I am charged with this fact, I never, to this day, perfectly recovered. Could a person in this condition execute violence against

another? I, feeble and valetudinary, with no inducement to engage—no ability to accomplish—no weapon wherewith to perpetrate such a fact;—without interest, without power, without motives, without means!

"My lord, Clarke disappeared; true; but is that a proof of his death? The fallibility of all conclusions of such a sort, from such a circumstance, is too obvious to require instances. One instance is before you; this very castle affords it.

"In June, 1757, William Thompson, amidst all the vigilance of this place, in open daylight, and double-ironed, made his escape; notwithstanding all advertisements, all search, he was never seen or heard of since. If this man escaped unseen, through all these difficulties, how easy for Clarke, whom no difficulties opposed! Yet what would be thought of a prosecution commenced against any one seen last with Thompson?

"These bones are discovered; where? Of all places in the world, can we think of any one, except the churchyard, where there is so great a certainty of finding human bones, as a hermitage? In times past, the hermitage was a place, not only of religious retirement, but of burial. And it has scarce, or never, been heard of, but that every cell now known, contains or contained these relics of humanity; some mutilated —some entire! Give me leave to remind your lordship, that here sat *Solitary Sanctity*, and here the hermit and the anchorite hoped that repose for their bones when dead they here enjoyed when living. I glance over a few of the many evidences, that these cells were used as repositories of the dead, and enumerate a few of the many caves similar in origin to St. Robert's, in which human bones have been found."

At this point the accused mentioned several places where bones have been found surrounded by circumstances not unlike those in the case before the jury. He concluded this portion of his address by mentioning two well-known facts, where skeletons had been found in that portion of Yorkshire. He then proceeded vehemently:

"Is, then, the invention of those bones forgotten or industriously concealed, that the discovery of these in question may

appear the more extraordinary? Extraordinary—yet how common an event! Every place conceals such remains. In fields—in hills—in highway sides—on wastes—on commons, lie frequent and unsuspected bones. And mark—no example, perhaps, occurs of more than one skeleton being found in one cell. Here you find but one, agreeable to the peculiarity of every known cell in Britain. Had two skeletons been discovered, then alone might the fact have seemed suspicious and uncommon. What! Have we forgotten how difficult, as in the case of Perkin Warbeck, and Lambert Symnel, it has been sometimes to identify the living; and shall we now assign personality to bones—bones which may belong to either sex? How know you that this is even the skeleton of a man? But another skeleton was discovered by some laborer? Was not that skeleton averred to be Clarke's, full as confidently as this?

"My lord, my lord,—must some of the living be made answerable for all the bones that earth has concealed, and chance exposed? The skull that has been produced has been declared fractured. But who can surely tell whether it was the cause or the consequence of death? In May, 1732, the ramains of William, Lord Archbishop of this province, were taken up by permission, in their cathedral; the bones of the skull were found broken, as these are; yet he died by no violence—by no blow that could have caused that fracture. Let it be considered how easy the fracture on the skull is accounted for. At the dissolution of religious houses, the ravages of the times affected both the living and the dead. In search after imaginary treasures, coffins were broken, graves and vaults dug open, monuments ransacked, shrines demolished; Parliament itself was called in to restrain these violations. And now are the depredations, the iniquities of those times to be visited on this? But here, above all, was a castle vigorously besieged; every spot around was the scene of a sally, a conflict, a flight, a pursuit. When the slaughtered fell, there were they buried. What place is not burial earth in war? How many bones must still remain in the vicinity of that siege, for futurity to discover? Can you, then, with so many probable circumstances, choose the one least probable?

Can you impute to the living what zeal in its fury may have done; what nature may have taken off and piety interred; or what war alone may have destroyed, alone deposited?

"And now, glance over the circumstantial evidence—how weak, how frail! I almost scorn to allude to it; I will not condescend to dwell upon it. The witness of one man, arraigned himself! Is there no chance, that, to save his own life, he might conspire against mine?—no chance, that he might have committed this murder, if murder hath indeed been done? that conscience betrayed him in his first exclamation? that craft suggested his throwing that guilt upon me, to the knowledge of which he had unwittingly confessed? He declares that he saw me strike Clarke—that he saw him fall; yet he utters no cry—no reproof. He calls for no aid; he returns quietly home; he declares that he knows not what became of the body, yet he tells where the body is laid. He declares that he went straight home, and alone; yet the woman with whom I lodged declares that Houseman and I returned to my house in company together;—what evidence is this? And from whom does it come?—ask yourselves. As for the rest of the evidence, what does it amount to? The watchman saw Houseman leave my house at night. What more probable—but what less connected with the murder—real or supposed—of Clarke? Some pieces of clothing are found buried in my garden; but how can it be shown that they belonged to Clarke? Who can swear to—who can prove—anything so vague? And if found there, even if belonging to Clarke, what proof that they were there deposited by me? How likely that the real criminal may, in the dead of night, have preferred any spot rather than round his own home, to conceal the evidence of his crime?

"How impotent such evidence as this! and how poor, how precarious, even the strongest of mere circumstantial evidence invariably is! Let it rise to probability, to the strongest degree of probability; it is probability still. Recollect the case of the two Harrisons, recorded by Doctor Howell; both suffered on circumstantial evidence on the account of the disappearance of a man, who, like Clarke, contracted debts,

borrowed money, and went off unseen. And this man returned several years after their execution. Why remind you of Jacques du Moulin, in the reign of Charles the Second? Why of the unhappy Coleman, convicted though afterwards found innocent, and whose children perished of want, because the world believed their father guilty? Why should I mention the perjury of Smith, who, admitted king's evidence, screened himself by accusing Painloth and Loveday of the murder of. Dunn? The first was executed, the second was about to share the same fate, when the perjury of Smith was incontrovertibly proved.

"And now, my lord, having endeavored to show that the whole of this charge is altogether repugnant to every part of my life; that it is inconsistent with my condition of health about that time; that no rational inference of the death of a person can be drawn from his disappearance; that hermitages were the constant repositories of the bones of the recluse; that the proofs of these are well authenticated; that the revolution in religion, or the fortunes of war, have mangled or buried the dead; that the strongest circumstantial evidence is often lamentably fallacious; that in my case that evidence, so far from being strong, is weak, disconnected, contradictory; what remains? A conclusion, perhaps, no less reasonably than impatiently wished for. I, at last, after nearly a year's confinement, equal to either fortune, entrust myself to the candor, the justice, the humanity of your lordship, and to yours, my countrymen, gentlemen of the jury."

This speech, delivered with fine elocutionary effects, in an earnest, and at times exceedingly dramatic manner, produced a decided effect upon both jury and audience; many of the latter being moved to tears. Had the case been submitted to the jury at this point, almost beyond question, the accused would have left the crowded courtroom a free man. Among all who listened to the impassioned address of the prisoner at the bar, one man sat entirely unmoved; this man was the judge, Mr. Justice Noel. Those unaccustomed to the proceedings in courts of law can have little idea of the effect sometimes produced upon a jury by the charge of the trial judge. He

DISCOVERY OF DANIEL CLARKE'S BONES IN ST. ROBERT'S CAVE.—PAGE 154.

stands as the personification of the law, and, whether wearing a black official robe, or dressed in the garb of an ordinary citizen, excites in men little accustomed to such scenes, as jurymen usually are, mingled feelings of respect and awe—respect for the exalted position he occupies, and awe at the fearful power entrusted to his hands. Where a judge has so conducted himself upon a trial as to command the entire respect of the jury, he can usually, by his rulings and charge, so impress and so influence them as to secure a verdict to his own liking. If this is true to-day, it was doubly so a century and a half ago; now, in many States of this Union, Illinois, for instance, the jury are the sole judges of both the law and the evidence. In England, the jury are judges of the evidence alone, the instructions of the judge on points of law being final, and leaving them no discretion in the matter. The tremendous influence that a judge can exercise in swaying juries to secure convictions, is amply shown in the success, in that direction, of the infamous Jeffreys, an account of whose judicial murders will be found elsewhere in this volume.

At the time when this famous trial occurred, the full and complete court reports of the present day were unknown. Of the trial of Aram, the prisoner's address is the only portion that has come down to us entire. This is to be regretted, for the charge of Justice Noel was considered at the time of its delivery as scarcely less eloquent and forcible than the defense of the prisoner. The points that he made are, however, well understood. He reviewed the evidence at great length, dwelling with care upon the most minute details. Houseman, the only direct witness to the tragedy, had contradicted himself in several particulars, and the judge instructed the jury that his position was to be taken into account. He had turned king's evidence, but naturally wished to avoid incriminating himself, any further than might be absolutely necessary. The weakness of this reasoning is apparent, yet it undoubtedly had great weight with the jury. Commenting upon the eloquent and logical defense of the accused, he used consummate skill and tact in robbing it of the force with which it had struck the twelve men in the jury box. He highly eulogized the elo-

quence of the prisoner, who, relying solely upon his own genius to impress the jury, had neither employed counsel nor called witnesses. His praise of Aram's effort from the artistic standpoint, and the warnings that he skilfully introduced, brought the jury down from the clouds to which the eloquence of the scholar had raised them, and, at one blow, destroyed its effect. This accomplished, he proceeded to solemnly declare that nothing in the elaborate argument of the prisoner at all answered or invalidated the positive evidence that had been produced against him.

The jury retired, and, after a short conference, returned with a verdict of guilty. The judge placed the black cap upon his head, and solemnly proceeded to sentence Eugene Aram to be executed three days later, August 16, 1759; his body to be hung in chains in Knaresborough forest. Aram received his sentence, which he knew to be absolutely final and irrevocable, with becoming dignity and composure.

The night before his execution he made a determined effort to terminate his own life. With a razor that he had somehow managed to secure, he cut his arm in two places. He made this attempt in the latter part of the night, and the fact was discovered early in the morning, in time to prevent his bleeding to death. Weak as he was, he maintained a serene composure to the last, and died as stoically as he had lived.

During the night preceding his execution, and just before he made the attempt to take his own life, Aram wrote two statements which will prove at once entertaining and instructive, as showing something of the real character of this remarkable man. One of them is something of a personal defense and justification of the suicide he was about to attempt. It is as follows:

"What am I better than my fathers? To die is natural and necessary. Perfectly sensible of this, I fear no more to die than I did to be born. But the manner of it is something which should, in my opinion, be decent and manly. I think I have regarded both these points. Certainly no man has a better right to dispose of a man's life than himself; and he, not others, should determine how. As for many indignities

offered my body, or silly reflections on my faith and morals, they are, as they always were, things indifferent to me. I think, though contrary to the common way of thinking, I wrong no man by this, and hope it is not offensive to that Eternal Being that formed me and the world; and as by this I injure no man, no man can reasonably be offended. I solicitously recommend myself to the Eternal and Almighty Being, the God of Nature, if I have done amiss. But perhaps I have not; and I hope this thing will never be imputed to me. Though I am now stained by malevolence and suffer by prejudice, I hope to rise fair and unblemished. My life was not polluted, my morals irreproachable, and my opinions orthodox. I slept sound till three o'clock, awakened, and then writ these lines:

"Come pleasing rest! eternal slumbers, fall!
Seal mine, that once must seal the eyes of all.
Calm and composed my soul her journey takes;
No guilt that troubles and no heart that aches.
Adieu thou sun! all bright, like her arise!
Adieu fair friends, and all that's good and wise."

The other paper is in the form of a letter addressed to a personal friend. It runs as follows:

"My Dear Friend:—Before this reaches you I shall be no more a man living in this world, though at present in bodily health; but who can describe the horrors of mind which I suffer at this instant? Guilt—the guilt of blood shed without any provocation, without any cause but that of filthy lucre—pierces my conscience with wounds that give most poignant pains! 'Tis true, the consciousness of my horrid guilt has given me frequent interruptions in the midst of my business or pleasure; but yet I have found means to stifle its clamors, and contrived a momentary remedy for the disturbance it gave me by applying to the bottle or the bowl, or diversions, or company, or business; but now all these, and all other amusements are at an end, and I am left forlorn, helpless and destitute of every comfort; for I have nothing now in view but the certain destruction both of my soul and body. My conscience will now no longer suffer itself to be hoodwinked or browbeat; it has now got the mastery; it is my accuser, judge and executioner; and the sentence it pronounceth against me is more dreadful than that I heard from the bench, which only con-

demned my body to the pains of death, which are soon over; but conscience tells me plainly that she will summon me before another tribunal, where I shall have neither power nor means to stifle the evidence she will there bring against me; and that the sentence which will then be pronounced will not only be irreversible, but it will condemn my soul to torments that will have no end.

"Oh! had I but hearkened to the advice which dear-bought experience has enabled me to give I should not now have been plunged into that dreadful gulf of despair which I shall find it impossible to extricate myself from; and therefore my soul is filled with horror inconceivable. I see both God and man my enemies, and in a few hours shall be exposed a public spectacle for the world to gaze at. Can you conceive any condition any more horrible than mine? Oh, no! it cannot be. I am determined, therefore, to put a short end to trouble I am no longer able to bear, and prevent the executioner by doing his business with my own hand, and shall by this means at least prevent the shame and disgrace of a public exposure, and leave the care of my soul into the hands of eternal mercy. Wishing you all health, happiness and prosperity, I am, to the last moment of my life, Yours with sincere regard,

"EUGENE ARAM."

These two papers of Eugene Aram are well worth the reader's critical examination. They show a composure and concentration of mind which is remarkable in one upon the threshold of eternity. More than that, they give an admirable demonstration of the man's true character. In the one first quoted, which, though unaddressed, was evidently designed for the public, as some sort of vindication of his memory, he represents himself as having lived a moral and religious life. Indeed, he distinctly claimed that he was a subject of injustice, and expected his reputation to shine fair and unblemished. His ingenious, but somewhat weak defense of suicide, makes in the same direction. In announcing his contempt of death and his faith in God, he evidently hoped to raise himself in the estimation of posterity, to which, he seemed intuitively to know, the story of his life would go down.

In the letter to his friend, which he apparently had no idea would ever become public property, he doubtless embodied his true feelings, and told of the awful remorse and fear that

harassed his guilty soul. Instead of maintaining his innocence, as he did by inference in the first paper, designed as a public vindication, he lays bare his soul to his friend, and, in express terms, admits his guilt. The entire letter tells of remorse and despair of future happiness, and carries upon its face strongs marks of sincerity. It would seem amply sufficient to destroy those arguments, many of which have been prepared in recent times, advanced to show that Aram was either entirely innocent or only very slightly culpable. That he was a depraved and vicious man, no one would now claim. The worst that can be said of him is that he yielded to the temptation to secure wealth by unlawful means, which culminated, perhaps against his wishes—for it is not at all improbable that Houseman was the leading spirit in the undertaking—in murder.

This letter doubtless furnished Thomas Hood with the suggestion for the remarkable poem in which he describes the remorse of the murderer. Like Lord Lytton, Hood varied the facts to suit the demands of his poetic fancy. It is one of the most powerful and realistic poems in the language. For the benefit of those of our readers who are not familiar with it, and also because it seems to constitute an essential part of the literature of this great case, it is quoted here, entire:

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM

'Twas in the prime of summertime,
  An evening calm and cool
And four and twenty happy boys
  Came bounding out of school:
There were some that ran, and some that leapt,
  Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
  And souls untouched by sin;
To a level mead they came, and there
  They drave the wickets in:
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
  Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran:—
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can;
But the Usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessed breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease;
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees!

Leaf after leaf he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide:
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome;
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strained the dusky covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp;
"O God! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp."

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took,—
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook,—
And lo! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book!

"My gentle lad, what is't you read—
Romance or fairy fable?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable?"
The young boy gave an upward glance,—
"It is 'The Death of Abel'."

The Usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,—
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked with him of Cain.

And long, since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves;
Of lonely folks cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves;
Of horrid stabs in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves.

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod,—
Ay, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God.

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,—
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain;
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain!

"And well," quoth he, "I know, for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,—
Who spills life's sacred stream!
For why? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder in a dream!

"One that had never done me wrong,—
A feeble man and old;
I led him to a lonely field,—
The moon shone clear and cold;
Now here, said I, this man shall die
And I will have his gold!

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife,—
And then the deed was done;
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone!

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill;
And yet I feared him all the more,
For lying there so still;
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill!

"And lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame;—
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame;
I took the dead man by his hand,
And called upon his name!

"O, God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain!
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood gushed out amain!
For every clot, a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain!

"My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the devil's price;
A dozen times I groaned; the dead
Had never groaned but twice!

"And now, from forth the frowning sky,
From the heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice—the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite;—
Thou guilty man! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight!

"I took the dreary body up
And cast it in a stream,—
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme:—
My gentle Boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream!

"Down went the corse with a hollow plunge,
And vanished in the pool;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening, in the school.

"O, Heaven! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in evening hymn;
Like a devil of the pit I seemed,
'Mid holy cherubim!

"And peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread;
But Guilt was my grim chamberlain
That lighted me to bed;
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red!

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep;
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at sleep;
For sin had rendered unto her
The keys of hell to keep!

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
That racked me all the time;
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime!

"One stern tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,—
Still urging me to go and see
The dead man in his grave!

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursed pool
With wild misgiving eye;
And now I saw the dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing;
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran;—
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began;
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murdered man!

"And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was other where;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
In secret I was there;
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare!

"Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep;
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
Till blood for blood atones!
Ay, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh,—
The world shall see his bones!

"O, God! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake!
Again, again with dizzy brain,
The human life I take;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay
Will wave or mould allow;
The horrid thing pursues my soul,—
It stands before me now!"
The fearful boy looked up and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between
With gyves upon his wrist.

CHAPTER XI

JUDICIAL MURDER

Scarcely any one is so ingenuous as to be ignorant of the fact that the scales of the "blind goddess" are not always held aloft with a fair and unwavering hand. We all know that human nature is frail, and that the real character of a man is not changed by wrapping his form in an official robe and elevating him to a seat upon the wool-sack. Judicial corruption has generally been discovered in cases of a civil nature, where property rights were involved, and a certain ruling of the court was considered worth a certain sum of money by one or the other of the parties in interest. So great and distinguished a lawyer and jurist as Lord Bacon pleaded guilty to a large number of indictments for receiving bribes while sitting in the exalted position of Lord Chancellor of England.

But in a criminal action on the part of the State, where the defendant is on trial for his life, judicial corruption is not frequent, and where the precedents of the law are strained somewhat, it is usually in favor of the accused, whose unhappy predicament excites the commiseration of a tender-hearted judge. Yet, since the establishment of the first court of criminal jurisdiction, down almost to the present day, men have been unjustly condemned to death. Except in rare instances, this has not resulted in bribes in the form of money. Sometimes judges have listened to the clamor of an enraged and prejudiced populace or have yielded to personal, political and religious bias. The effect of the latter may be noted in many of the almost innumerable trials for witchcraft, which for centuries stained the judicial records of Europe and finally crossed the ocean and disgraced our early colonial history. In most instances, probably, these judicial crimes were

chargeable to judicial ignorance, which, at the best, only reduces the enormity of the offense. So distinguished a judge as Sir Matthew Hale, Chief Justice of England, condemned some women, convicted of witchcraft, to ignominious death, and avowed his full faith in the delusion of that age, declaring that it was a most grave and dangerous crime.

By far the greater portion of judicial murders have been committed at the instance of authorities higher than the presiding judge, and thus assume the form of conspiracy. Thousands of men have been elevated to judicial positions, not by reason of their legal knowledge or honorable character, but rather because they were corrupt at heart and could be used to further the murderous schemes of king, queen or prime minister. In the nature of things, judicial murders can easily be perpetrated without the fact becoming public, and probably not one instance in ten has ever come to the light.

The most sweeping, wholesale condemnations to death, under the forms of law, of men whose conviction and death had already been determined upon and whose trial was a hideous farce, occurred under the "Reign of Terror," during the French Revolution. Hundreds, thousands, of men and women, some guilty, most of them innocent, were condemned and guillotined. To be denounced by one of "the leaders of the people" was equivalent to a sentence of death. The judges generally did their work willingly enough, for the impulse to kill had fairly become epidemic, and ran riot through Paris. An honest and unbiased judge could not, however, have done otherwise—and retained his own life. Trials were conducted in the most abitrary manner, and judgments rendered without the slightest reference to either the law or the evidence. While such proceedings cannot be too strongly condemned, it must be remembered that they occurred at a time which suggests the words of Marc Antony upon the occasion of the assassination of Julius Cæsar: "Oh, Judgment! thou hast fled to brutish beasts, and men have lost their reason!"

The most systematic and wholesale judicial murders that have occurred in modern times, were committed in England

during the latter part of the seventeenth century. Although occurring more than a hundred years before those of the French Revolution, they excite greater wonder, because they were perpetrated in a time of comparative domestic peace, under a constitutional government, and in a country where trial by jury originated and has ever been treated with the most profound respect. While illustrating murder through motives of revenge, cupidity and the operation of the homicidal impulse, they likewise show to what extent notions of political liberty and religion can become perverted and debased. The first of two series of most outrageous judicial murders dated from the discovery of what has passed into history as "The Popish Plot." This was in the year 1678. At this time England was torn by dissensions. Charles II. sat upon the throne that had been made vacant by the execution of his father. The triumph of the Puritan party and the Commonwealth, under the direction of Oliver Cromwell, were things of the recent past. Charles was suspected of being a Papist, while his brother James, the direct heir to the throne, was a pronounced Catholic. Less than a century and a half had elapsed since the Protestant Reformation had shown itself in England, and religious feeling, not to say bigotry, was at its flood-tide. The Protestant element, which largely predominated, feared that, with James upon the throne, a long line of Catholic rulers might be fastened upon the nation. A feeling of uncertainty and unrest was everywhere present. Hatred of the Catholic religion had become a positive passion. Nor was this confined to men truly religious; it pervaded all grades of society, and affected the irreligious and profane to a greater extent, even, than those who were Protestant from genuine religious conviction. The cruelties of the reign of "Bloody Mary," the numerous conspiracies against Elizabeth, the famous Gunpowder Plot, and various other occurrences of lesser note, so far from being forgotten, were perpetuated and rendered living forces by annual commemorations, prayers, bonfires and parades. Much of the hatred that had been bestowed upon Puritanism was transferred to the adherents of the See of Rome. In

brief, the feeling against Catholics was exceedingly bitter, and everywhere plainly outspoken.

It is necessary also that the reader have some sort of understanding of the political condition of England at this period, else he would fail to appreciate the high tension to which the people were strung. At this time, the nation was divided into two great political parties. The Whigs took their name from the rustics of the Western Lowlands, who had long been known by that term. They were zealots in the Protestant cause, and strenuously objected to a Catholic prince sitting on the throne of England and Scotland. The term Tory was derived from certain Papish outlaws who took refuge in the bogs of Ireland and successfully defied the authorities. From this beginning, the name Tory spread over the kingdom, and came to include, not alone Catholics, but all those who did not join in the popular movement to render Roman Catholic princes ineligible to the throne.

The "Popish Plot," which shook England to its foundations, and has left a distinct effect upon English opinions, plainly discernible even at the present day, was the discovery, or more properly, the invention, of one Titus Oates. This man, whose name has become a synonym for perjury, was a clergyman of the Church of England. He had led a most depraved life, which culminated in his being compelled to give up his benefice and lead a wandering, vagrant sort of life. During this time he went to the Continent, where he professed the Roman Catholic religion, and became connected with various Jesuit colleges. There, it appears, he had heard much discussion as to the best means to reclaim England to the original church. These hints were enough to furnish a starting point for one of the inventive and corrupt mind of Oates. Upon his return to England he announced himself as a Protestant, and secured a minor position in the church, which brought him but a trifle in the way of money, not sufficient to enable him to indulge his depraved and vicious tastes.

In the latter part of September, 1678, Titus decided that the time was ripe for the hideous plot he had long been cun-

ningly devising, and he proceeded to give it publicity. He declared that the Pope had given the Jesuits absolute control of England, with authority to do what they pleased and to subject it to themselves. He claimed that this society had already apportioned all the official positions, civil as well as religious, among well known and trusted Catholics, who were only awaiting a favorable opportunity to enter into their possession. He pointed out that the Papists had burned London only twenty years before, and declared that they were making ready to do it again. They were only awaiting an agreed signal to rise and put all Protestants to death, while a French army was, simultaneously, to be landed in Ireland. As for the King, his doom was sealed, many sub-plots having been formed for his assassination by the poniard, the pistol and poisoning. Such was the state of the public mind, that his grossly improbable lies found ready, eager credence, and something like a panic swept over the city of London, and gradually spread throughout all England. Fortunately for Oates and the success of his infamous scheme, which had no higher aim than to make money and notoriety for himself, two incidents happened at this time which tended to reinforce his statements.

One Edward Coleman, a somewhat suspicious Catholic intriguer, was arrested upon information furnished by Oates. He had destroyed the greater portion of his papers, but among those seized were a few which, when liberally interpreted, seemed to confirm some of the statements made by the enterprising Titus. What, the people reasoned, must have been the character of those documents committed to the flames, when those he had not thought necessary to destroy were incriminating? This raised the informer in the popular estimation. The deposition of Oates against Coleman had been made before Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, an eminent and very moderate justice of the peace, and a few days thereafter he mysteriously disappeared. Search being made, his corpse was found in an open field near London. It was certain that he had been murdered, and equally sure that the crime had not been committed for purposes of gain. His death remains

to this day one of the dark mysteries so frequently to be met with in the history of homicide. All sorts of theories were suggested. Some said that he was a suicide; some that a private enemy had killed him from motives of revenge; others that Oates had had him put to death to sustain his own disclosures; while the general opinion was that the justice had fallen a victim to Popish revenge, and that this was the beginning of the great plot. Certain it is that everybody took the alarm; Papists were arrested by hundreds, and the jails were overcrowded; the streets were barricaded in places; the train-bands were constantly on duty; cannon were placed around Whitehall; everybody went armed; the Houses of Parliament were heavily guarded to prevent a second Gunpowder Plot.

In the meantime, Titus had secured no letters patent to protect his great invention, and numerous aspiring imitators came forward to divide his doubtful "honors," and reap a portion of his prospective pecuniary profits. One knew of an army of thirty thousand men that was about to descend upon Wales; another had been offered a large sum, and a certain place among the blessed saints, if he would murder King Charles, while still another had heard a prominent Catholic banker swear to kill the usurping tyrant. But Oates had no idea of being dispossessed of his preëmpted rights, and speedily came forward with a set of lies more absurd than he had at first dared to offer. These were eagerly listened to, and bodily swallowed, so great was the general alarm.

Then began vengeance, and judicial murder walked rampant. The Whigs encouraged the movement, and found ready tools in the chief judges of the realm, who were at once corrupt, cruel and cowardly. The leading men of England no doubt believed the whole story to be pure fiction, but it provided a means to rid themselves of some of their enemies, and they professed the most complete faith. Oates and his confederates were now in the greatest demand. Two witnesses were necessary to secure a conviction of treason, and these were always forthcoming. Among them all, Oates was the acknowledged leader. Cunning and shameless, he perjured himself with an ease and versatility that would have done

credit to the Father of Lies. The juries were made up of men violently prejudiced and badly frightened, while the judges, without regard to the character of the witnesses or the insufficiency of the evidence, constantly advised, and in some cases forced, verdicts of guilty, which received the plaudits of the multitude. As a result of the Popish Plot, large numbers of men, some of them occupying positions of distinction, nearly all of whom were doubtless entirely innocent, were murdered.

After a time, however, the inevitable reaction began to set in, and an accusation was no longer equivalent to a conviction. Oates and his colleagues had not lost the art of lying, but the people were becoming less credulous.

This reaction finally carried down the men who had engineered the plot, and with them Oates himself. Retribution did not, however, overtake the infamous perjurer until Charles was dead, and his Catholic brother, James, had ascended the throne. Not long before his ascension James had brought a civil suit against Oates, and had secured a verdict in the enormous sum of a hundred thousand pounds. He was committed to prison as a debtor, and was without hope of release.

Oates was brought to trial on two charges of perjury. "It was proved beyond all possibility of doubt," wrote Lord Macaulay, "that this man had by false testimony deliberately murdered several guiltless persons. He called in vain upon the most eminent members of the Parliaments which had rewarded and extolled him, to give evidence in his favor. Some of those whom he had summoned absented themselves. None of them said anything tending to his vindication. One of them, the Earl of Huntingdon, bitterly reproached him with having deceived the Houses and drawn on them the guilt of shedding innocent blood. The judges browbeat and reviled the prisoner with an intemperance which, even in the most atrocious cases, ill becomes the judicial character. He betrayed, however, no sign of fear, or of shame, and faced the storm of invective which burst upon him from the bar, bench, and witness box, with the insolence of despair. He

was convicted on both indictments. His offense, though, in a moral light, murder of the most aggravated kind, was, in the eye of the law, merely a misdemeanor. The tribunal, however, was desirous to make his punishment more severe than that of felons or traitors, and not merely to put him to death, but to put him to death by frightful torments. He was sentenced to be stripped of his clerical habit, to be pilloried in Palace Yard, to be led round Westminster Hall with an inscription declaring his infamy over his head, to be pilloried again in front of the Royal Exchange, to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and, after an interval of two days, to be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. If, against all probability, he should happen to survive this horrible infliction, he was to be kept close prisoner during life. Five times every year he was to be brought forth from his dungeon and exposed on the pillory in different parts of the capital.

"This rigorous sentence was rigorously executed. On the day on which Oates was to be pilloried in Palace Yard he was mercilessly pelted and ran some risk of being pulled in pieces. But in the city his partisans mustered in great force, raised a riot, and upset the pillory. They were, however, unable to rescue their favorite. It was supposed that he would try to escape the horrible doom which awaited him by swallowing poison. All that he ate and drank was therefore carefully inspected. On the following morning he was brought forth to undergo his first flogging. At an early hour an innumerable multitude filled all the streets from Aldgate to the Old Bailey. The hangman laid on the lash with such unusual severity as showed that he had received special instructions. The blood ran down in rivulets. For a time the criminal showed a strange constancy; but at last his stubborn fortitude gave way. His bellowings were frightful to hear. He swooned several times; but the scourge still continued to descend. When he was unbound, it seemed that he had borne as much as the human frame can bear without dissolution. James was entreated to remit the second flogging. His answer was short and clear: 'He shall go through with it if he has breath in his body.' An attempt was made to obtain the Queen's inter-

cession; but she indignantly refused to say a word in favor of such a wretch. After an interval of forty-eight hours, Oates was again brought out of his dungeon. He was unable to stand, and it was necessary to drag him to Tyburn on a sledge. He was quite insensible; and the Tories reported that he had stupefied himself with strong drink. A person who counted the stripes on the second day said that they were seventeen hundred. The bad man escaped with life, but so narrowly that his ignorant and bigoted admirers thought his recovery miraculous, and appealed to it as a proof of his innocence. The doors of the prison closed upon him. During many months he remained ironed in the darkest hole of Newgate. It was said that in his cell he gave himself up to melancholy, and sat whole days uttering deep groans, his arms folded, and his hat pulled over his eyes."

For three and a half years this infamous wretch sat in his cell at Newgate, except when placed in the pillory. In the interest of justice he should have been suffered to die there. But many fanatics still regarded him as a martyr, and after William and Mary ascended the throne, a movement was started to secure his release on the ground that his sentence to perpetual imprisonment was unlawful. After a legal struggle, almost without parallel in the judicial history of England, and which involved a hard conflict between the two Houses of Parliament, the Lords bitterly opposing his release, Oates was given his freedom. Not satisfied with this, the House of Commons took up his cause and secured him a pension of about three hundred pounds a year. After an effort to get himself reinstated in the Established Church, he became a devout Baptist. His real character was soon discovered, however, and he was expelled from the society. He died at the advanced age of eighty-six years.

The religious system of the Parsees, or Fire Worshipers, accounts for the existence of evil in the world on the theory that there were two creators, both subject to the "Supreme Essence," one of whom, Ormuzd, brought into being all good and desirable things, while the other, Ahriman, was engaged in creating evil things to offset their effect. The lives of mil-

lions of men have been compliments to human nature, but seemingly as large a number have been engaged in offsetting the good accomplished by their virtuous brothers, and in lowering the standard of genuine manhood. Among all the detestable wretches whose lives have darkened the pages of history since the days of Commodus, not one is more universally and justly maligned and detested than George Jeffreys, of all the dishonest, inhuman judges who ever dispensed justice —or rather, dispensed with justice—undoubtedly the first and foremost. His depravity has passed into a proverb, and among the various political parties and religious faiths of England, or indeed, the civilized world, no voice is ever raised, no pen ever employed to defend or vindicate his memory. So remarkable was this man's career of infamy, so brutal his conduct, and so entirely was he subject to the fiendish impulse to take human life, that some account of his character and judicial methods cannot fail to interest and instruct. The following is quoted from Thomas Babington Macaulay, one of the best of all recent chroniclers of English history.

"He was a man of quick and vigorous parts, but constitutionally prone to insolence and to angry passions. When just emerging from boyhood, he had risen into practice at the Old Bailey Bar, a bar where advocates have always used a license of tongue unknown in Westminster Hall. Here, during many years his chief business was to examine and cross-examine the most hardened miscreants of a great capital. Daily conflicts with prostitutes and thieves called out and exercised his powers so effectually that he became the most consummate bully ever known in his profession. Tenderness for others and respect for himself were feelings alike unknown to kim. He acquired a boundless command of the rhetoric in which the vulgar express hatred and contempt. The profusion of maledictions and vituperative epithets which composed his vocabulary could hardly have been rivaled in the fish-market or the beer garden. His countenance and his voice must always have been unamiable. But these natural advantages,—for such he seems to have thought them,—he had improved to such a degree that there were few who, in his paroxysms of rage,

could see or hear him without emotion. Impudence and ferocity sate upon his brow. The glare of his eyes had a fascination for the unhappy victim on whom they were fixed. Yet his brow and his eye were less terrible than the savage lines of his mouth. His yell of fury, as was said by one who had often heard it, sounded like the thunder of the judgment day. These qualifications he carried, while still a young man, from the bar to the bench. He early became Common Sergeant, and then Recorder of London. As a judge at the City Sessions, he exhibited the same propensities which afterwards, in a higher post, gained for him an unenviable immortality. Already might be remarked in him the most odious vice which is incident to human nature, a delight in misery merely as misery. There was a fiendish exultation in the way in which he pronounced sentence on offenders. Their weeping and imploring seemed to titillate him voluptuously; and he loved to scare them into fits by dilating with luxuriant amplification on all the details of what they were to suffer. Thus, when he had an opportunity of ordering an unlucky adventuress to be whipped at the cart's tail, 'Hangman,' he would exclaim, 'I charge you to pay particular attention to this lady! Scourge her soundly, man! Scourge her till the blood runs down! It is Christmas, a cold time for madame to strip in! See that you warm her shoulders thoroughly!' He was hardly less facetious when he passed judgment on poor Lodowick Muggleton, the drunken tailor who fancied himself a prophet. 'Impudent rogue!' roared Jeffreys, 'thou shalt have an easy, easy, easy punishment!' One part of this easy punishment was the pillory, in which the wretched fanatic was almost killed with brick-bats.''

Such was the real character of the man chosen by James, Duke of York, to carry into effect the plans of revenge that he had formed against his enemies and against those who had been instrumental in persecuting Catholics. This will appear strange when it is understood that Jeffreys had announced himself as a Roundhead, and had taken a prominent part in condemning innocent men to death upon the perjured testimony of Oates and his ill-favored colleagues. More than

that, Charles knew the real character of the unjust and tyrannical judge. Titus Oates never wearied of quoting a remark which the King applied to Jeffreys: "That man has no learning, no sense, no manners, and more impudence than ten carted street-walkers." But James had work to do, and saw in Jeffreys the man to carry it forward, and he induced his brother to elevate him to the high position of Chief Justice of the king's bench. It mattered little to this human monstrosity which side of any cause he espoused, so long as he was offered an opportunity of exercising his venomous hatred of humankind and indulging the impulse to take life, which seems to have become a veritable passion with him. Accordingly, he entered with alacrity upon the discharge of his infamous duties.

His first recompense for the high honor and magnificent emoluments that had been bestowed upon him, consisted in the judicial murder of Algernon Sidney, a grand-nephew of the famous Sir Philip Sidney, and one of the leading men of England. He was tried for high treason and convicted, under the direction of Jeffreys, upon the merest mockery of evidence. On the 7th of December, 1683, he was beheaded on Tower Hill. He met his death with the greatest fortitude, and has since been almost canonized in English hearts as a patriot, hero and martyr. So entirely satisfied was James with his bloody tool, that, soon after his elevation to the throne, he bestowed on him a peerage and a seat in the cabinet. When it is understood that not since the thirteenth century had any chief-justice been permitted to sit in the House of Lords, it will be seen that James appreciated his avenger at his true worth; indeed, no two men in England were more completely of the same kidney.

James had not long occupied the throne when an opportunity to utilize the services of Jeffreys and wreak a deep revenge upon those whom he regarded as his enemies presented itself. During the lifetime of Charles II., a great deal of trouble had been caused by James, Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of the King, who, by his humanity in treating the Scotch Covenanters in 1659, had become the idol of the non-

conformists. By 1680 he had become the most popular man in the kingdom. For intriguing to seat himself upon the throne he was arrested in 1682. He acknowledged himself guilty of participation in the famous Rye House plot to seize the King's person and subvert his government, meanly involving many of his friends and supporters. Pardoned by Charles on his solemn promise to reform and loyally support the Duke of York, should he ever ascend the throne, Monmouth fled to Antwerp. Soon after the death of his father in 1685, he landed at Lynn-Regis and issued a manifesto declaring James a usurper and Papist, and asserting his own legitimate right to the throne. He raised an army and gave battle to the King, but was ignominiously defeated, and proved himself a coward by leading the general flight. He was convicted of high treason and executed on Tower Hill, the executioner performing his task so unskilfully that five blows were struck before his head fell.

This was the opportunity of the revengeful James. Many of the adherents of Monmouth had been in strong sympathy with the plot of Titus Oates, and retribution in kind seems to have been deliberately planned. In the meantime, a brutal soldiery, under the leadership of Col. Percy Kirke, a most debased and inhuman officer, were wreaking direful vengeance in the west of England, where the insurrection had assumed the most formidable proportions. Hundreds, probably thousands, were thus inhumanly put to death, without the slightest form of trial. The slaughter over—and, in the nature of things, it could not be long sustained—the "forms of law" were appealed to, and that in a way that wrought direful vengeance on the unhappy accused, and, at the same time, covered the judiciary of England with dark and lasting disgrace.

In one respect Kirke had displeased James; he had murdered large numbers of poor and humble people, but had generally spared the rich and powerful. Hundreds of the last-named class had, however, been arrested, and the jails of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire were literally packed with prisoners. These were the people whom James most desired

to reach. He made no immediate movement, but allowed several weeks to pass before starting in motion the wheels of the legal machinery that was to crush those ardent Protestants who had espoused the cause of his nephew, Monmouth.

Early in September, 1685, several carriages, strongly escorted with military, set out from London for the "West Country." They contained, beside the infamous Jeffreys, four other judges, the most cruel and unscrupulous that could be mustered, though saints in comparison with the chief-justice. They were to act under his direction, and great results were confidently expected by the revengeful King and his party. We shall soon see that the confidence of the monarch had not been misplaced. Yet, depraved as James knew his tool to be, he seems to have been doubtful whether he would be severe and relentless enough. A few days after the five licensed murderers had quitted London on this sanguinary errand, Francis North, Lord Guilford, Keeper of the Great Seal, died of mortification and disgust caused by the treatment he had received at the hands of the King, and particularly at the disgrace that his high office was falling into through the outrageous acts of the chief-justice. James at once dispatched a courier bearing a letter to Jeffreys, announcing Lord Guilford's demise, and assuring him that, if he dispatched his business to the exact taste of the King, he might expect the Great Seal as his reward. It is doubtful whether a man with the homicidal impulse developed as it was in Jeffreys needed any stimulus to do the work that had been assigned him. The fact is noted as showing that the element of cupidity probably entered into the awful judicial murders which speedily followed.

It was at Winchester, in Hampshire, that Jeffreys opened his commission and made ready to set up his judicial shambles. This shire had witnessed none of the bloody scenes of the rebellion, but many refugees had fled thither and been arrested and thrown into jails. It seems fitting to the character of the chief-justice and the detestable nature of his errand, that the first victim of his mingled cruelty, avarice, desire for notoriety and homicidal impulse, should have been

a woman — charitable, hospitable, virtuous, universally respected and absolutely guiltless of wrong-doing, much less of the crime of treason. This woman was Alice Lisle, the aged widow of John Lisle, who had sat in the Long Parliament and in the High Court of Justice, for which reason she was known as "Lady Alice." This excellent woman had many friends among the Tories. She had deeply regretted the course of her husband, had shed tears over the execution of Charles I., and often relieved distressed cavaliers. Two fugitives, John Hickes, a nonconformist divine, and Richard Nelthorpe, a lawyer, applied to her for relief. She gave them food and showed them where they might sleep. In this she seems to have been actuated only by the common, but none the less highly commendable, impulse of hospitality. In the morning her house was surrounded by soldiers. They found Hickes in the malt-house, and dragged Nelthorpe from the chimney. For this offense she was placed on trial for her life.

If it could have been proven that she knew the men she had succored to have committed a capital crime she would have been technically guilty as an accessory after the fact. But this was not established. She admitted that she knew Hickes was in trouble of some sort, but swore that she had entertained no idea that he had, in any way, participated in the rebellion. She only knew him as a clergyman and a devout Christian, and supposed he was wanted for having preached in the fields. Nelthorpe she did not know, and had not even inquired his name. In this case she but followed the Scottish custom, where the name of an unknown guest was not asked, lest he should prove an hereditary foe and necessitate his being sent away hungry.

> "Such was the reverence for a guest,
> That fellest foe might join the feast
> And from his deadliest foeman's door
> Unquestioned turn the banquet o'er."

When it is remembered that no acts of violence had occurred in the section where Lady Alice resided, and that the names of the persons found upon her premises were in no proclamation, it seems entirely probable that she told the

exact truth, and was absolutely innocent. In any event, her offense was of a slight, we might almost say, amiable, character. The strong point made in her defense was that, inasmuch as neither Nelthorpe nor Hickes had been brought to trial, she could not legally be put in jeopardy of her life as an accessory to their crimes. This should have led to her immediate dismissal. To Jeffreys this point was a mere bagatelle, and was overruled, with curses.

So strong was the sympathy for the unfortunate lady, that even the Tory witnesses hesitated to perjure themselves by testifying against her. The jury was made up of reputable men, who, though devoted to the cause of James, were men of honor, and shrank from their odious task. But for Jeffreys, she would have been instantly acquitted. He stormed, raved and blasphemed. "But I will tell you," he shouted, "there is not one of those lying, snivelling, canting Presbyterians but, one way or another, had a hand in the rebellion. Presbytery has all manner of villainy in it. Show me a Presbyterian, and I'll show you a lying knave." For a full hour he continued his violent and blasphemous diatribe. He reminded the jury that the prisoner's husband had borne a part in the execution of Charles I., a fact that had not been proven and would have been irrelevant if it had been shown. The jury were out a long time, and Jeffreys sent for them and heaped torrents of abuse upon their heads for not agreeing to a verdict of guilty. Doubtless the twelve men saw arrest and prosecution before them if they refused to comply. With most of us, fear is a stronger incentive to action than a sense of honor. At last they yielded, and reluctantly returned a verdict of guilty.

That the chief-justice meant to earn the Great Seal and at the same time gratify his depraved and malevolent heart, is evident from the sentence which he gleefully and profanely pronounced the following morning. He directed that Alice Lisle should be burned alive at the stake that very afternoon. Like crime, cruelty must be educated and developed. Jeffreys himself was a past-master in the art, and not only understood, but fairly reveled in its refinements; but the Tories of Hampshire had yet much to learn in that direction, and the

dreadful sentence aroused their sleeping humanity and provoked their indignation. The clergy of Winchester Cathedral remonstrated vigorously, and Jeffreys, who, though bent on murder in its most horrible form, was not entirely destitute of prudence, reluctantly consented to postpone the execution for five days. This brief respite was employed to urge the royal clemency. Many prominent people interested themselves in her behalf; among these, Clarendon, the King's brother-in-law, pleaded her cause. But James was bent on "feeding fat" his deep-seated revenge. The chief-justice was doing his duty, and he proposed to support him. The best that he could be induced to do was to commute her sentence from burning to death by the axe. She was executed in the market-place of Winchester, and met her fate with lofty courage.

The Bloody Assizes were now fairly inaugurated. Jeffreys had set a pattern for his associates in the business, which they were not slow in imitating. The harvest was ready and, although the reapers were few, they were eager for the labor and understood the art of dispatching business with the least possible loss of time. The chief-justice tried no more prisoners in Hampshire, but, after witnessing, with every indication of intense satisfaction, the execution of his first victim, passed on to Dorchester, the principal town of the county in which Monmouth had landed. As if to foreshadow the awful slaughter he had planned, Jeffreys ordered the court-room to be hung with scarlet. The people noted this, and an awed hush, broken only with hoarse whispers, fell upon the town. More than three hundred cases of treason were on the trial docket. Such an array of prisoners would have dismayed an ordinary scoundrel, but it produced no other effect upon the chief-justice than to start his inventive wits into action. His plan was speedily matured. He gave it out that the only chance of securing clemency was for the accused to plead guilty and throw themselves upon the mercy of the court. Over two hundred and fifty caught at the bait and received the kind of mercy that a cat bestows upon a captive mouse. Twenty-nine persons who put themselves upon the country—i. e., elected to stand trial—were convicted and executed without delay. Of

the three hundred prisoners, two hundred and ninety-two received sentence of death. The whole number hanged in Dorsetshire reached the respectable total of seventy-four.

After a brief stay in Exeter, the leading town of Devonshire, where the rebellion had gained little foothold, but where he secured a few victims, the avenging judge, like a second "Scourge of God," passed on into Somersetshire. Here he was in his proper element, and literally gloated over the bloody harvest he was to reap. Somersetshire had been the hotbed of the rebellion, and it was here that James had directed the vengeance to fall heaviest. In the whole history of fallen man, from murderous Cain down to our own time, no human being has probably ever lived who so nearly typified the Arch Fiend exulting over a lost soul, as did George Jeffreys upon this occasion. The homicidal impulse seems to have gained absolute control over him.

"The chief-justice was all himself," wrote Lord Macaulay. "His spirits rose higher and higher as the work went on. He laughed, shouted, joked, and swore in such a way that many thought him drunk, from morning to night. But in him it was not easy to distinguish the madness produced by evil passions from the madness produced from brandy. A prisoner affirmed that the witnesses who appeared against him were not entitled to credit. One of them he said was a Papist, and another a prostitute. 'Thou impudent rebel,' exclaimed the judge, 'to reflect on the king's evidence! I see thee, villain, I see thee already with the halter round thy neck!' Another produced testimony that he was a good Protestant. 'Protestant!' said Jeffreys; 'you mean Presbyterian. I'll hold you a wager of it. I can smell a Presbyterian forty miles.' One wretched man moved the pity even of the bitter Tories. 'My lord,' they said, 'this poor creature is on the parish.' 'Do not trouble yourselves,' said the judge, 'I will ease the parish of the burden.' It was not only against the prisoners that his fury broke forth. Gentlemen and noblemen of high consideration and stainless loyalty, who ventured to bring to his notice any extenuating circumstances, were almost sure to receive what he called, in the coarse dialect which he had learned in

the pot-houses of Whitechapel, a lick with the rough side of his tongue. Lord Stawell, a Tory peer, who could not conceal his horror at the remorseless manner in which his poor neighbors were butchered, was punished by having a corpse suspended in chains at his park gate. In such spectacles originated many tales of terror, which were long told over the cider by the Christmas fires of the farmers of Somersetshire. Within the last forty years, peasants, in some districts, well knew the accursed spots, and passed them unwillingly after sunset."

The accused were given short shrift in Somersetshire. Within a few days two hundred and thirty-three victims were tried, convicted, hanged and drawn and quartered. The whole country was reduced to one vast charnel house; not a place in all the shire where two roads met, not a market-place or village, but what corpses swung in irons and human heads and quarters hung on lofty poles, poisoning the air and horrifying the populace. For a generation, the people of Somersetshire did not recover from the awful shock.

To describe in anything like detail the hundreds of cases disposed of by Jeffreys and his colleagues upon this memorable assize, would far transcend our available space; but a few special cases of interest may be mentioned as illustrating the depravity of the wretch.

At the battle of Sedgemoor a religious zealot named Abraham Holmes had been taken prisoner. He refused to acknowledge the authority of James, affirming that he would own no king but King Jesus. The execution of this man showed him to be possessed of high faith and indomitable courage. Indeed, the latter had been made manifest upon the battle-field. His arm had been fearfully mangled, and, there being no surgeon at hand, he proceeded to amputate it himself. Carried up to London, he was examined by the King himself. "I am an aged man," he said to James, "and what remains to me of life is not worth a falsehood or a baseness. I have always been a republican, and I am so still." The King manifested no mercy, but sent him back to the West, where Jeffreys speedily condemned him. The horses that were to draw Holmes to the place of execution balked

and refused to be driven forward. "Stop, gentlemen," cried the condemned man, who doubted not that an angel with a flaming sword, invisible to human eyes, stood in the way, "let me go on foot. There is more in this than you think. Remember how the ass saw him whom the prophet could not see." He mounted the ladder leading to the gallows awkwardly, and offered this apology: "You see, I have but one arm." Holmes may have been a fanatic, but he was a brave man, and died manfully in the cause of his religion. Readers of Conan Doyle's "Micah Clarke" will recognize him in one of the characters of that entertaining novel.

Something of romance touched the case of Christopher Battiscombe, a young gentleman of family, fortune and refinement, who was condemned by the chief-justice at Dorchester. It appears that he was affianced to a most worthy young lady, a sister of the sheriff. She appealed to Jeffreys for clemency for her lover, but the beast drove her from him with a brutal and indecent jest. Young Battiscombe met death with a most supreme Christian fortitude.

The fate of the brothers Hewling excited widespread interest, and well-nigh universal commiseration. They were young, highly accomplished, and moved in the very best society. One of the leading merchants of London and the recognized head of the English Baptists, Kiffin by name, was their maternal grandfather. Of the two brothers, William and Benjamin, the former was first placed on trial. He furnished a bright and shining mark for Jeffreys, who hurled at him his most cruel shafts of sarcasm and Whitechapel wit. In passing sentence of death he brutally remarked: "You have a grandfather who deserves to be hanged as richly as you."

Although only a lad of nineteen, William met his death with such meekness and fortitude as to melt the hearts of all the witnesses of his tragic end. A decided revulsion of feeling manifested itself, and strong efforts were made to save the life of Benjamin. The matter became a topic of general conversation, and it was everywhere agreed that one youthful victim was surely a fair quota for one family to furnish. To the surprise of everybody, Jeffreys recommended leniency.

Lest the reader conclude that there was in this man's breast a spark of humanity, and that he was sometimes willing to forego the satisfaction of his murderous instinct, the reason of his pretended decency should be stated. A kinsman of the chief-justice entered an impassioned appeal for the stricken family. From this kinsman, who was immensely rich, Jeffreys had large expectations, and he yielded in deference to that. Did cupidity triumph over the impulse to take human life? it may be asked. No; much as he loved money, the latter passion was the one that ruled his infamous life. Jeffreys, better than any one in England, knew the hard, revengeful heart of his royal master, and assumed little risk of losing his prey by playing for his inheritance. Although strongly pressed, James proved as cold and inflexible as marble. Benjamin Hewling was judicially murdered, and so dauntless was his courage, so high his hopes of an immortal life, that all about the gallows, including some of the hardened soldiers who guarded it, were moved to tears.

Jeffreys often boasted that he was the most loyal subject of the realm, because he had put to death more traitors than all of his predecessors put together, since the Norman conquest. "It is certain," says Lord Macaulay, "that the number of persons whom he put to death in one month, and in one shire, very much exceeded the number of all the political offenders who have been put to death in our island since the Revolution. The rebellions of 1715 and 1745 were of longer duration, of wider extent, and of more formidable aspect than that which was put down at Sedgemoor. It has not been generally thought that, either after the rebellion of 1715, or after the rebellion of 1745, the House of Hanover erred on the side of clemency. Yet all the executions of 1715 and 1745 added together will appear to have been few indeed when compared with those which disgraced the Bloody Assizes. The number of the rebels whom Jeffreys hanged on this circuit was three hundred and twenty."

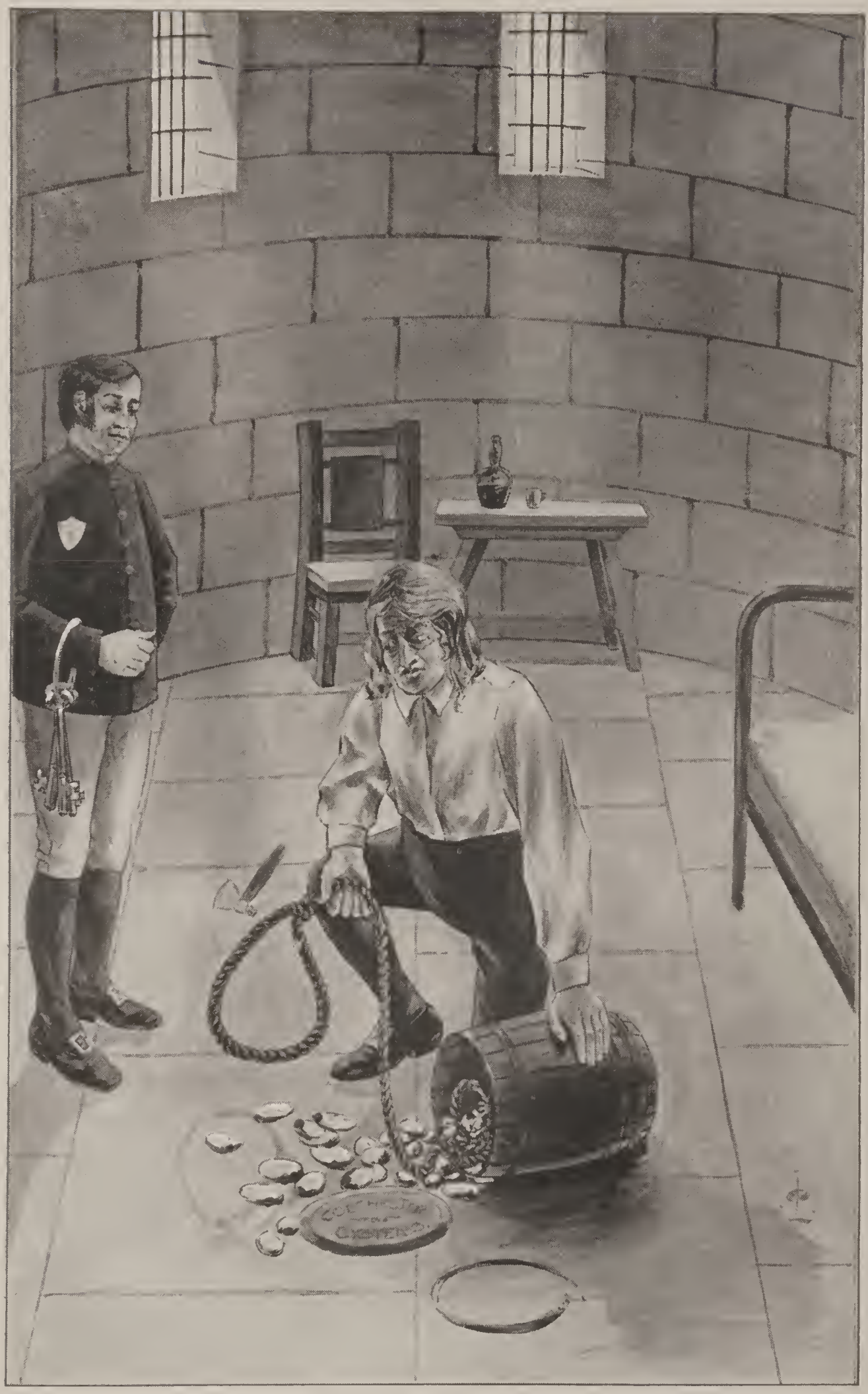
Macaulay had access to the best authorities and may well be trusted on most statistical points, yet Bishop Gilbert Burnet, who was a contemporary of Jeffreys, and one of the fore-

most men in England, places the number murdered on that terrible circuit at fully six hundred.

In addition to the number put to death by order of the chief-justice, he transported eight hundred and forty-one. It may be thought that these do not fall within the category of judicial murders. Such an assumption is entirely wrong. Without exaggeration, it may be said that death upon the gallows was preferable to such a fate. These wretched men were divided up into gangs and given as slaves to court favorites to be transported to some one of the West India Islands, where, amid awful privations and subject to the most inhuman treatment, they were to die lingering, horrible deaths.

Those who have carefully read this brief, yet, we believe, entirely impartial, account of the famous Bloody Assizes, will surely be convinced that the world is growing better. Such proceedings would not be permitted in any civilized nation at the present day. More than that, such a ruler as James could not sit upon a throne to raise to a high judicial position a second George Jeffreys. Bad men, with murderous hearts, we still have with us, but the general sentiment of mankind has become so far elevated that they can no longer employ forms of law to gratify their revenge and general disposition to destroy their fellows.

Something of the further history and final ending of this great judicial monstrosity will prove of interest and serve to "point the moral" of this most sanguinary chapter. For some time he continued to serve his master, James, rendering many unjust decisions and never missing an opportunity to send an unhappy wretch to the scaffold. He was obliged to use the utmost precaution, however, to save himself from assassination, particularly at the hands of the people of Somersetshire, who regarded him with a hatred and loathing that is absolutely without a parallel in the entire history of England. Upon his return from the West he was received by James with open arms. The Great Seal was placed in his hands at Windsor, and the London *Gazette* solemnly announced that he had been made Lord Chancellor as a reward for the many and eminent services he had rendered to the Crown. Numerous



JEFFREYS INSPECTING HIS PRESENT.—PAGE 193.

other honors were showered upon him by the King. He was made President of the Court of High Commission, and Lord Lieutenant of two counties. James attempted to make him Chancellor of the University of Oxford, but, happily, an irrevocable selection had been made before the royal mandate arrived, and the great university was saved from lasting disgrace.

Jeffrey's end, while in no sense a sufficient punishment for his awful crimes, shows that wickedness is often overtaken with retribution. In 1688, the wicked James, no longer able to maintain his position as king, abdicated the throne and fled to France. When Jeffreys learned that he had left London, he was seized with consternation, and resolved to secure safety from the popular indignation by instant flight. He disguised himself as a common sailor, and made ready to quit the country. A man who had once been brought before the chief-justice and abused and reviled, saw him through the window of an ale-house, and, notwithstanding his excellent disguise, recognized his savage eye and brutal mouth. A mob set upon him, from which he was rescued with difficulty, and, at his own request, sent to the Tower. During the drive, his life was constantly menaced, and he begged piteously for protection. The fury of the populace knew no bounds; all classes, sexes and conditions united in demanding his life. He had long been addicted to strong drink, and after his imprisonment consumed enormous quantities of brandy. This aggravated an old internal complaint, and led to his speedy death. Shortly before the end came he was aroused from the stupor into which he was almost constantly plunged, by a present of what appeared to be a barrel of Colchester oysters, his favorite dainty. With shaking hands, he congratulated himself that he still had one friend remaining. He hastened to open the barrel, and found, among a lot of oyster shells, a rope with a well-tied hangman's noose. He died a most miserable death on the eighteenth of April, 1689, in his forty-first year. His emaciated corpse was placed beside that of Monmouth in the chapel of the Tower, and the curtain was rung down upon one of the bloodiest dramas ever enacted upon the stage of English history.

CHAPTER XII

ASSASSINATION

Of the manifold forms of murder, none is more detestable than that denominated assassination. To take the life of a human being as the result of a quarrel, or upon any occasion where the party assailed is conscious of the danger that confronts him, and is able to make some kind of defense, is bad enough, but it appears a minor offense when contrasted with shooting from ambush, stabbing in the back, murderously assaulting one wrapped in slumber or mixing poison with food offered in the sacred name of hospitality. A large proportion of homicides are, strictly speaking, assassinations, but the instances presented in the present, and ensuing chapters, will be restricted to those where the victims have been persons of distinction, as kings and other rulers; where the methods employed were of an unusual character, or where bodies of men have banded themselves for the purpose of perpetuating secret murder, as the Assassins, the Stranglers, and the Mafia.

Assassination seems to be almost as old as the human race, and many pages of the Old Testament Scriptures are darkened with instances of secret murder, some of them of a most atrocious character. Of all the homicides of Bible times, none seems to have had a greater predisposition to take human life than Joab, the chief captain of David. Fierce and unmerciful in battle, he was hardly less so in times of peace, and more than once sorely grieved the heart of his royal master by yielding to the promptings of revenge. The assassination of Abner, who had been the captain of Saul's host, by Joab, can hardly be surpassed for malice and treachery.

Saul had been several years dead, and David was ruling

over Israel, but considerable feeling seems to have existed against those who had supported Saul in the struggle for the throne. Abner and some of his friends had met Joab, attended with a number of personal followers, beside the pool of Gibeon. At Abner's suggestion, which was readily acquiesced in by Joab, twelve young men of each faction arose to play before the company. The twelve followers of Joab, as seemingly prearranged, each seized one of the other party by the head and dispatched him by thrusting his sword into the side of the unsuspecting youth, who, in a spirit of amity and friendship, had placed himself in his power. As a matter of course, this led to a general affray, in which Abner and his remaining adherents were worsted and put to flight. Abner was pursued by Asahel, a brother of Joab, who "was as light of foot as a wild roe." Looking back, Abner repeatedly warned his pursuer to turn either to the right or left, but Asahel kept on in the race. At length Abner shouted to him: "Wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how, then, should I hold up my head to Joab thy brother?" Asahel still pursuing, Abner, to defend his own life, halted suddenly, and "with the hinder part of the spear, smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there and died in the same place."

It is not strange that one of Joab's fierce and revengeful temperament should be roused to fury by this act, although it was the legitimate result of his own treacherous, wholesale assassinations. Without the knowledge of King David, he sent messengers after Abner, who induced him to come into Hebron, the ancient capital of Palestine. When Abner arrived, Joab told him that he wished to speak with him in private, and led him aside, in the gate, where, without the slightest warning, he smote him under the fifth rib, exactly where the spear of Abner had struck his brother, Asahel, and he instantly died. David was sorely grieved at this act of treachery; he commanded Joab and all the people to wear sackcloth, and personally followed the body of the murdered man to the grave.

Joab was a great captain in times of war, and upon no

other explanation can we account for the close relations that he long sustained to King David. And yet he brought down the gray hairs of the old king in sorrow to the grave, for he never recovered from the death of his best-beloved son, Absalom, who fell a victim to Joab's impulse to take human life. The incident is too well remembered to require repetition. The literature of the world hardly presents a spectacle of grief at once as deep and as lofty as that of the Hebrew king over the untimely death of his well-beloved son.

Whether murder is ever justifiable, may well be doubted, yet we can hardly find it in our hearts to condemn or even strongly reproach the lovely Judith, who, at a sacrifice, which only a true woman can appreciate, invaded the camp and took the life of the wicked Holofernes. Holofernes was the general commanding the Assyrian army, which had been sent against Israel. This army had invaded Judea and besieged Bethulia. With their supply of water cut off and with little food at their command, the Israelites had small chance for escape; but delivery was at hand, in the person of a young and beautiful woman, Judith, the widow of Manasses. She realized that the welfare, the lives even, of her people depended upon immediate action; and, at the same time, knew that the army was entirely unable to successfully oppose the foreign invader. Realizing the desperate straits to which her people were reduced, she resolved upon a bold exploit, coupled with dangers and encompassed with most serious embarrassments. Accompanied only by a trusty maid, she sallied forth from the city and sought the camp of the Assyrian army. Here, she was at once presented to Holofernes, and passed some days in his company, always accompanied by her maid, and maintaining the strictest and most religious decorum. As might well have been expected, the mighty Assyrian captain fell violently in love with the youthful Jewish widow. At length her time arrived; Holofernes became drunk and stupid from the immoderate use of wine. As he slept, she approached his bed, took down his falchion, seized hold of the hair of his head and cried: "Strengthen me, O Lord, God of Israel, this day!" Then she struck with all her might, and with two

blows cut off the head of the wicked monster. Placing the head in a bag, in which they had brought their supply of food, the two women repaired to the city. Consternation seized upon the forces of the Assyrians, and they were easily put to flight by the Israelites, rendered courageous by the bold and self-sacrificing act of a woman.

To write the history of assassination would be to outline the history of mankind; not that secret murder has been the principal business of the race, but rather, that in early days the fall of a king or prince essentially changed the present welfare and future prospects of their people. Many kings and potentates in the Oriental countries fell at the hands of assassins; poison being the means most commonly employed. A large number of the Emperors of Rome were thus removed from the scenes of their crimes, while not a few truly good rulers have been assassinated. Julius Cæsar fell beneath the daggers of his one-time friends and supporters, at the foot of Pompey's statue. After that time, the Emperors felt all the anxiety that disturbs our modern czars, and guarded by every means in their power, against the knife and poisoned cup of the assassin, but too often in vain; the ambition of rivals, who were able to excite the venality of the rabble, and, more especially, the army, generally proving superior to all their precautions.

A most inexcusable and sacrilegious assassination desecrated Canterbury Cathedral, in England, and made it the meeting-place of no end of devout pilgrims who came thither to "view the holy, blissful martyr's bones," as old "Dan" Chaucer expresses it. Here, in the reign of that most ignoble and treacherous monarch, Henry II., Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, was brutally murdered. In several respects, this prelate was a most remarkable personage. In the first place, the incidents that led to his birth were of a character so romantic as to well rival the most remarkable instance in fiction. Doubt has been thrown on this story, which has been the theme of many poems, but it seems fairly well authenticated. It is told with many variations. We present it here substantially as related by the great novelist,

Charles Dickens, in his brief, but highly entertaining and instructive History of England.

"Once upon a time, a worthy merchant of London, named Gilbert à Becket, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and was taken prisoner by a Saracen lord. This lord, who treated him kindly, and not like a slave, had one fair daughter, who fell in love with the merchant; and who told him that she wanted to become a Christian and was willing to marry him if they could fly to a Christian country. The merchant returned her love, until he found an opportunity to escape, when he did not trouble himself about the Saracen lady, but escaped with his servant Richard, who had been taken prisoner along with him, and arrived in England and forgot her. The Saracen lady, who was more loving than the merchant, left her father's house in disguise to follow him, and made her way, under many hardships, to the seashore. The merchant had taught her only two English words (for I suppose he must have learned the Saracen tongue himself, and made love in that language), of which London was one, and his own name, Gilbert, the other. She went among the ships, saying, 'London! London!' over and over again, until the sailors understood that she wanted to find an English ship that would carry her there; so they showed her such a ship, and she paid for her passage with some of her jewels, and sailed away. Well! The merchant was sitting in his counting house in London one day, when he heard a great noise in the street; and presently Richard came running in from the warehouse, with his eyes wide open and his breath most gone, saying, 'Master, master, here is the Saracen lady!' The merchant thought Richard was mad; but Richard said, 'No, master! As I live, the Saracen lady is going up and down the city, calling Gilbert! Gilbert!' Then he took the merchant by the sleeve, and pointed out the window; and there they saw her among the gables and water-spouts of the dirty dark street, in her foreign dress, so forlorn, surrounded by a wondering crowd, and passing slowly along, calling Gilbert! Gilbert! When the merchant saw her, and thought of the tenderness she had shown him in his captivity, and of her

constancy, his heart was moved, and he ran down into the street; and she saw him coming, and with a great cry fainted in his arms. They were married without loss of time, and Richard (who was an excellent man) danced with joy the whole day of the wedding; and they all lived happy ever afterward."

Thomas à Becket was the only son of this London merchant and his devoted Saracen wife; and his life, so romantically begun, was destined to fill many pages of the world's history.

As a young man, Thomas à Becket was brave, fighting several battles in France; courteous, being a general favorite with the gay and rather depraved court, and, on the whole, inclined to be decidedly dissolute. He early attracted the attention of King Henry, who was himself a depraved character, and, besides, was at war with the clergy, and needed somebody to become his tool in keeping them in proper subjection. The King had made him chancellor and, as an ambassador to France, he had almost overwhelmed the people by the splendid state in which he traveled. Henry decided that here was a man to make Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Church in England. The King knew his chancellor intimately, and never once doubted that he was securing the willing and unscrupulous tool he required to carry into effect his base and oppressive designs. The suggestion raised a storm in England, for Thomas à Becket had not lived a life calculated to make him a capable and just religious ruler. But the King insisted and the appointment was made.

In doing this, as was speedily proven, Henry made the greatest mistake of his life. The new archbishop had tasted every worldly pleasure, and longed for fame in another direction; besides, it seems likely that he secretly hated the King, and was resolved upon revenge. Almost his first act was to change the whole course and tenor of his life. He turned away all his brilliant and dissolute followers, ate coarse food, drank bitter water, lived in a little cell, wore sackcloth next his skin, and almost daily flogged himself as a penance for his many sins. No event ever transpired in England that surprised the people more than this radical reformation of a man

who had been accounted one of the most rollicking gallants in all the kingdom.

If the King was angry at this course, he was enraged when, by virtue of his high office, the archbishop forced the former to give up various rich estates that the crown had long wrongfully withheld from the clergy, among them the castle and city of Rochester. From this time forward a deadly war was waged between the clergy and the crown; the archbishop and the king. Henry had his army, but Thomas à Becket possessed the power of excommunication, which he used without stint. In the meantime, both parties were appealing to the Pope, the archbishop having been forced to quit England and take up his residence in Flanders. At last, through the offices of the King of France, who was greatly attached to the archbishop, a meeting between the two enemies was arranged on French soil, which, however, came to nothing.

After an absence of seven years the archbishop returned to England, although warned by his friends not to do so. He made his way at once to Canterbury, being well received by the common people, who most cordially hated the King.

Thomas à Becket refused to remove the excommunications that he had so freely imposed, and the King was driven almost to madness. At length, one day, in the presence of all his court, he cried out: "Have I no one here who will deliver me from this man?" Among the knights present, four decided to obtain Henry's favor by doing the work his question implied. These men were Reginald Fitzurse, William Tracy, Hugh de Morville and Richard Brito. Three of them had been in the train of Thomas à Becket in the old days of his splendor, while chancellor.

These men, bent on murder and anxious for the reward that seemed certain to follow, rode away secretly on horseback. On the third day, being December 29, 1170, they arrived at Canterbury and presented themselves, attended by twelve men at arms, at the house of the archbishop. They endeavored to persuade and to force the archbishop to remove his excommunications, but were entirely unsuccessful. The murderous knights and their heavily armed attendants finally

withdrew from the house, but soon returned and began to beat down the great gate of the palace, which, in the meantime, had been closed and secured. His servants entreated the prelate to take refuge in the cathedral, where they were certain his enemies would not dare to follow him. He refused to do this, but, hearing the voices of the monks singing the vesper service, said that it was now his duty to go, and repaired to the sacred edifice. So secure did his servants consider him, that they did not bar the doors of the church, deeming that no man would dare to commit an act of violence there.

But the faithful servants little understood the desperate character of these men, who bore the honorable title of knights. The ruffians at once forced themselves into the cathedral, and presented themselves to the archbishop, who stood before the altar of St. Benedict. Here he was put to death with sword thrusts, Reginald Fitzurse striking the first blow.

The murderers at once fled, and succeeded in getting out of England; the King having, with his customary treachery, repudiated them and their dark deed. They reached Rome in the guise of penitents, and were sent on a pilgrimage to Palestine—rather a light punishment, it would appear, for so heavy a crime. As for Henry, he was compelled to make heavy concessions to the church to avoid the ban of excommunication. Two years after his death, Becket was canonized by Pope Alexander III. The body of the murdered archbishop had been hastily buried in a crypt in the cathedral, but in 1220 his bones were raised and deposited in a splendid shrine, which, for three centuries, was the object of one of the greatest pilgrimages of Christendom. The stories told by a company of twenty-nine such pilgrims make up the still famous Canterbury Tales of Chaucer.

Among the most distinguished and powerful of all the ancient families of the Florentine republic must be reckoned the Medici. They came into prominence early in the thirteenth century, and did not become extinct until 1743. Cosmo de Medici, born in 1389, reached the highest distinction of any

of that remarkable family, and upon him was bestowed the honorable title of "Father of his Country." But, while some of the De Medicis were truly great, more of them were absolutely debased. They carried on intrigues, political and otherwise, almost without number, and, justly or unjustly, are reckoned among the greatest poisoners of the world.

This famous family is mentioned here to introduce to the reader Catherine de Medici, at whose instance Admiral Coligny was assassinated as the signal for the beginning of the fearful massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, an occurrence without parallel in the criminal annals of modern times. Few of her sex have exercised the powers that fell to the lot of this woman through a long life, and probably none ever used authority in a worse manner. She seems to have been almost entirely under the control of a horrid impulse to take life, for upon no other reasonable hypothesis can her crimes be accounted for. Her murders have been ascribed to religious fanaticism; but this is clearly a mistake, for she cared absolutely nothing for religion, and systematically violated its every precept and practice. She was too depraved and monstrous to have been susceptible to the emotion of love, and hence jealousy can hardly be charged with her base designs. All her affections were centered in herself, and cruelty appears to have been the one ruling passion of her life.

Catherine was the granddaughter of Pietro de Medici, a most treacherous and depraved man, possessed of neither honor nor prudence. In 1533 she married Henry, the son of Francis I. of France, who succeeded that monarch as Henry II. in 1547. She appears to have cordially hated the French people, and to have desired to trample them under her feet. During the latter years of the life of Francis I., his corrupt court was dominated by the Duchess de Estampes, while Catherine was compelled to share the affection of her husband with a famous beauty known as Diana de Poitiers. It is not likely that Catherine cared for Henry, but, none the less, she hated the woman who largely usurped her place, as also she detested the mistress of her royal father-in-law. Such was her guile and duplicity, however, that she openly courted the

favor of each of these infamous women. Henry died in 1559, his death resulting from a wound received in a friendly tournament, and was succeeded by his son, Francis II. This monarch was crowned when Catherine was about forty years of age, and, while not imbecile, was weak, physically, mentally and morally. His mother had expected to absolutely control the government, but, unfortunately for her base schemes, he had married a very remarkable woman, Mary Queen of Scots, and was completely under the influence of his young, beautiful and highly accomplished wife. As is well known to the reader, Mary was an intense Catholic. She at once took sides against the Huguenots—the reformers of France.

Here was Catherine's opportunity, and she lost no time in taking advantage of it. Although she thoroughly detested the Protestants, she openly espoused their cause. In this she thought she saw a way to return herself to the power she had lost through her son's marriage with the Scotch Queen. It seems clear that at this time she was plotting for the imprisonment of Francis II., and the death of other members of the royal family who stood in the path of her infamous ambition. She proposed that the King be retired from the active exercise of the functions of his high office, and a Huguenot Council of Regency be appointed, of which she was to be the head. To this the Huguenots gave a ready assent, but the plot was discovered before it was fully perfected, and several of the leaders suffered death. Having exhausted this expedient without beneficial results, Catherine, with all the natural hypocrisy of her nature, promptly returned to the Catholic fold.

And now fortune seemed to favor this designing and wicked woman. The young King died in 1560, after a very brief reign, and was succeeded by his brother, Charles IX., then but ten years of age. As regent, Catherine exercised almost unlimited power, which she used to the oppression of the Huguenots on all possible occasions. During the years that preceded the majority of the young King, his mother had succeeded in utterly corrupting him. She had instilled into his mind a love of perfidy and cruelty, and had dulled all his moral sensibilities as completely as if he had been educated for

a Strangler. She pandered to his basest passions and instincts, and taught him, above all, to hate and despise the Huguenots. In the meantime, a regular warfare had been in progress in France between the Catholics and Huguenots, and each side had well-nigh exhausted its resources. In 1570 a peace was concluded whereby the reformers obtained the privilege to freely exercise their religion.

Catherine de Medici seems, about this time, to have formed that dark plot which has since rendered her name infamous, and will continue to do so, while time lasts and assassination is despised. The better to prepare for it, she expressed great sympathy for the Huguenots, and even attempted to lull them into a feeling of security by marrying her daughter Margaret to the youthful Henry of Bearn, afterward Henry IV., on August 18, 1572, a week before the dreadful massacre which was already planned, although no day had then been set for its occurrence. Bad as the young King was, he manifested some reluctance in giving his royal sanction to the wholesale murder. It is more than likely that this was due to fear rather than any lingering feeling of humanity. His mother finally convinced him that the Huguenots were plotting against his life, and that their effectual repression was an absolute necessity. Henry of Bearn was an associate of Admiral Coligny, and one of the leaders of the Huguenots. His marriage was the means of drawing the admiral to Paris, where his presence was much desired by the murderous and scheming Catherine. On the 22d of August, four days after the marriage, Coligny was wounded by a shot fired from a window. Hearing of this, the King hastened to him, and swore to revenge his injury. Upon returning to the palace, his mother succeeded in still further poisoning his mind against the gray-haired old man. "By God's death!" he exclaimed, "let the admiral be slain, and not him only, but all the Huguenots, till not one remains that can give us trouble!"

The Duke Francis of Guise was ordered to make ready for the massacre which Catherine had decided should occur on the night of St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 1572. His first move was to have a close watch kept upon the city, to the

end that no Huguenot be permitted to leave, on any pretext whatever. The first victim of Catherine's murderous impulse was Admiral Coligny, who was also bitterly hated by the Duke of Guise. On the night when the massacre began, a detachment of soldiers, under the personal direction of the revengeful Guise, forcibly entered his residence and cut him down with their swords. His body was then thrown into the street, where, after the duke had trampled it under his feet, it was given over to the indignities of a howling, drunken mob. In the carnage that ensued, the King himself bore a part. Standing before a window in his palace and urged on by his mother, he fired repeatedly at those that were fleeing past. The scene that ensued simply beggars description; the hate of a generation was poured out upon that awful night. A French historian has attempted it in the following paragraph:

"Out on the still night boomed the great bell, high up in the stone tower of St. Germain l'Auxerrois; and at the signal, there poured forth into the streets a horde of fanatic murderers, who executed the will of the demon woman. The houses of the Huguenots were broken into, and their screaming inmates dragged forth into the streets and ruthlessly butchered. Others were hewn down in their nightclothes, as they ran out of their chambers, and their bodies were flung from the windows to the pavement below. Women and children were chopped to pieces in their beds, and their white sheets crimsoned with their gore. The flaming torches in the streets lighted up a scene of pandemonium miles on miles in extent. All over the city, the pavements were slippery with blood, corpses lay in heaps, with gashed necks, dripping sanguinary tears—with both sexes and in all ages piled in indiscriminate slaughter. The voice of weeping and of wailing, shrieks of anguish and groans of despair, of wrangling tiger-like struggling, and shouts of 'Vive Dieu et le Roi'—Live God and the King—all in one horrid babble, rose up to the shuddering skies, where the stars looked down in mocking serenity. Flying frantically, hither and thither, the defenseless Huguenots sought in vain for shelter. They were

dragged from their hiding-places with yells of exultation, and pierced with gleaming daggers."

The lives of many men of eminence were preserved with great difficulty, the Prince of Condé and the King of Navarre only escaping death by going to mass and appearing to conform in the regulations of the Catholic Church. The frightful carnage continued for several days, and the streets of Paris almost literally ran with Huguenot blood. The massacre was not confined to the metropolis, but quickly spread to nearly all the other cities of France, and was carried on in the agricultural districts as well. This was done by the direct command of the King, moved thereto, no doubt, by his infamous mother. In some of the provinces the authorities were ashamed to publish the orders that had been transmitted to them, but large numbers of fanatics came forward and proceeded to execute the royal mandate. The exact number of people murdered was never known, and has been variously stated at from thirty to seventy thousand; fifty thousand being probably a conservative estimate.

Outside of France, the fearful massacre of St. Bartholomew's day excited feelings of mingled horror and disgust. The Queen of England deliberately turned her back upon the French ambassador when, next after the perpetration of the wholesale murder, he was ushered into her presence. The indignation of the Christian nations was not lost upon France, and from that time the persecution of the Huguenots began to grow unpopular and die away, until, in 1598, Henry IV. promulgated the Edict of Nantes, which undertook to secure religious liberty to all alike.

The fears that tormented the youthful King before the massacre, and which were played upon by his mother to secure his authority to that detestable act, appear to have increased after the event. It is said likewise that he was consumed by a most fearful and never-ceasing remorse, and that he came to absolutely detest and abhor the unnatural mother who had corrupted his youthful mind and morals, and whom he held responsible for the monstrous crime he had engaged in. Be that as it may, and authorities differ on this point, Catherine's

influence began to diminish, and she soon came to have practically nothing to do with the affairs of the State. Such a condition was far from pleasing to the designing woman. Charles died May 30, 1574, a moment most favorable for the future designs of his mother. It is said that his death was due to poison, but this point has long been disputed and cannot be said to be well established. The story is that Catherine procured a book on hunting, a pastime to which the King was greatly inclined, and caused the leaves to be touched here and there with a glutinous substance which had been impregnated with a most deadly poison. This book was thrown in the King's way, and he naturally became interested in its contents. To separate and turn the leaves the King would moisten his fingers on his tongue and in this way took the poison into his system. He is said to have died in great agony and remorse, shedding blood at every pore.

Catherine now thought that the moment of her absolute supremacy had arrived. Her sons Francis and Charles were both dead, while Henry, her youngest child, had, through her intrigues, been placed upon the throne of Poland, and was supposed by his mother to be on that account incapacitated from becoming King of France. In Henry's eyes, however, the throne of France was vastly preferable to that of Poland—besides, he was not wanted in Poland. Accordingly, he abandoned his Polish sovereignty, and returned to Paris, where he grasped the reins of government, and was crowned Henry III. He was by no means as weak, either of body or in mind, as his brothers, and his mother was unable to dominate him to the same extent. She did, however, succeed in persuading him that the Duke of Guise, who had been prominent in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, was plotting against his life. Believing this, he conspired with his mother for the duke's assassination. The latter was summoned to the palace at an early hour one morning, and as he entered the royal apartments, he received a sword thrust through the body from a guardsman who had been stationed there for that purpose. He fell to the floor and expired, just as the King entered the chamber in which the deed had been committed in time to

inflict upon the body of the victim the indignity of a kick. This was in 1588.

The long list of evil acts of Catherine de Medici terminated only with her death, which occurred shortly after the assassination of the Duke of Guise, and the thoroughly debauched King was thrown upon his own resources, and sadly missed the advice of that wily politician, who, for more than half a century, had exerted a mighty and most baneful influence upon public affairs, much of the time being practical ruler of the kingdom. But the last important advice of his mother, the assassination of the Duke of Guise, led to most disastrous results. The doctors of Sorbonne, a celebrated academic body at Paris, which dates from the middle of the thirteenth century, and which, down to the French Revolution, held a prominent place in all church controversies, declared that the people were relieved of the duty of obedience to the King, while the Leaguers, who stood for the maintenance of the Roman Catholic religion and had been organized by the murdered Duke of Guise, dissolved the parliament.

Henry was distracted at the difficulties that surrounded him, and, learning that Guise's brother, the Duke of Mayenne, had been declared lieutenant-general of the kingdom, threw himself under the protection of Henry of Navarre. Politics and statecraft make many strange combinations, and the two newly reconciled kings were soon advancing upon Paris at the head of an army of 40,000 Huguenots. Although Mayenne was a brave man and ably defended the city, it is likely that he would have been forced to capitulate, had it not been for the unexpected death of Henry III. On the 1st of August, 1589, a fanatical young Dominican brother, Jacques Clement, obtained access to the King under pretext of having something of great importance to communicate, and killed him by plunging a knife into his body.

Upon the death of Henry III., Henry of Navarre, being the nearest male descendant of the royal house of France, was made King of France, as he already was of Navarre. Born of a Calvinistic mother, Henry was a zealous Protestant, although he had, to save his life, been compelled to conform

to the Catholic faith. It was this Henry who won the splendid victory over Mayenne at Ivry in 1590, which Lord Macaulay has immortalized in verse. He had escaped from the court of Paris, where he was a virtual prisoner, in 1576, and had promptly revoked his compulsory conversion and again taken command of the Protestant army. To render himself secure in his succession to the throne of France, in July, 1593, he again changed his religion and recanted Protestantism with great pomp at St. Denis' in Paris. Early in 1610, the King decided to levy war upon Germany, and leave his second wife, Marie de Medici, daughter of the Duke of Tuscany, regent of France during his absence Marie was crowned with great pomp, and the following day, May 14, 1610, the King was assassinated. Owing to the changes in his religion and the violent enemies he had made, Henry had long been a mark for assassins, no less than nineteen attempts having been made upon his life.

On the day of his death, Henry attended mass at a church in the Rue St. Honore. At this time an assassin, one Francois Ravaillac, was seeking his life, but deferred the execution of his design owing to the presence of the Duke of Vendome. About four o'clock in the afternoon, accompanied by the Marquis de la Force, Mirabeau, and Mesdames de Ravarden, Roquelaure and de Liancourt, the King entered his carriage. Ravaillac followed the royal carriage with the intention of stabbing Henry as the latter passed through the gates into the palace yard. The King, however, altered his route, and directed his driver to stop in a narrow street then known as the Rue de la Ferroniere, to await the passage of two carts which blocked the way. This was the assassin's opportunity. Mounting on the rear wheel of the coach and reaching over the shoulder of the Duke of Epernon, he stabbed the unfortunate King with a long-bladed knife. The monarch cried out, "I am wounded!" The murderer had not been seen by the inmates of the carriage, and might have escaped had he thrown down the knife. Upon reaching the ground, however, he stood erect and as motionless as a statue with the bloody knife still in his hand. A gentleman standing by was about

to run Ravaillac through the body with his sword, but was prevented by the Duke of Epernon, who cried out, "Save him, on your life!" The King was carried back to the Louvre, where he shortly afterward died. The punishment meted out to his murderer was barbarous in the extreme. Having been fastened firmly to a wooden cross, his right hand was burned off in a slow fire. The fleshy parts of his body were torn with red-hot pincers and into the gaping wounds were poured melted lead, hot oil, pitch and rosin.

CHAPTER XIII

ASSASSINATION—CONTINUED

William, Prince of Orange, and Count of Nassau, commonly known as William of Orange, was the real founder of the independence of the Netherlands. He was born in 1533, and was one of the most illustrious men of his age. Well beloved by millions of people, he was quite as cordially hated by an equally great number. He was the idol of the Dutch, and an implacable foe of the Spanish Inquisition. When a boy of fifteen, he became the page of the Emperor Charles V., who took great interest in him, attended to his education, and rapidly advanced his youthful protégé. In 1555, when William was but twenty-two years of age, the Emperor promoted him over the heads of many veteran officers and placed him in command of the Imperial army on the French frontier. Upon his abdication, Charles strongly recommended William to his son, and successor, Philip, who employed him to draw the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis, and selected him as one of the four hostages to be given to France for its fulfilment. During his residence in Paris, William was confidentially informed by Henry II. of a secret arrangement between France and Spain, looking to the complete extermination of all heretics in both countries. Although a very young man, William was lacking neither in courage nor prudence, and, although greatly shocked at such a proposition, he was able to maintain his composure, and at the same time he solemnly resolved in his own mind to oppose, with every means in his power, the execution in the Netherlands of the infamous scheme. Returning to the Netherlands, the prince became the leader of the party pledged to maintain the chartered liberties of the country.

In the long wars which ensued, William developed such masterly skill, and possessed such unbounded control over his people, that the Spaniards offered an enormous reward, amounting to a million dollars, to any one who would assassinate him. This offer, which was made by Philip, whom he had at one time served, was accompanied by a guarantee of a full and free pardon, together with a patent of Spanish nobility. This proposal was made on the 18th of March, 1580, and was a virtual death warrant for the high-minded, humane and patriotic prince. The first attempt upon the life of the Prince of Orange was made on Sunday, March 18, 1582. After leaving the table, where he had entertained a number of noblemen at dinner, he started at the head of his guests to conduct them to a different part of the palace. Pausing on the threshold to call the attention of the company to a fine piece of tapestry, he was approached by a young man of slender build and agreeable appearance, who presented a petition. While William was making ready to examine the document, the pretended petitioner produced a pistol, which he placed near the head of the prince and fired. The bullet entered the neck under the right ear and came out under the left jaw. So near was the weapon that the greater portion of the prince's beard was burned off. The magnanimity of William is well illustrated by his first word after he realized that an attempt had been made upon his life. "Do not kill him!" he cried, "I forgive him my death!"

But the thoughtful and merciful direction came too late. The words had not left his mouth when the miserable assassin fell, his body pierced in thirty-two places by the weapons of the attendants, who were supposed to guard the prince against like attacks, which had long been expected. Besides, he was run through by the swords of two of the accompanying noblemen. The name of the would-be assassin was Juan Juareguy, an employé of a Spanish merchant, domiciled at Antwerp. There was little doubt but what the young man undertook the desperate and wicked deed for the one purpose of obtaining the promised reward.

For a long time William lay in a most critical condition, his

physicians being unable to determine whether he would recover or succumb to the effects of his wound. So great was the devotion of his people, who universally loved him, that business was largely suspended, the one anxiety being to obtain the latest news from the bed-chamber of the wounded prince. By May 2d, he had so far recovered as to be able to attend a public thanksgiving for his fortunate escape, in the great cathedral. Not only was the church crowded to suffocation, but the streets were thronged, while the shouts of the populace attested the extreme joy of the nation.

Two months later two desperate scoundrels, Salseda, a Spaniard, and Basa, an Italian, attempted to earn the magnificent reward offered by Philip. Their plan was to dispatch the prince by the administration of poison. Their plot was fortunately discovered, and they were thrown into prison, where Basa succeeded in committing suicide. Salseda was executed in a manner that suggested the cruelties of the Inquisition, which the Dutch so violently denounced; his body being torn to pieces by four horses.

The third attempt upon the life of the Prince of Orange was mady by one Pietro Dorgogne, who came to Holland from Spain in March, 1583, for that purpose, but who failed to accomplish his design. In 1584, Hans Hanzoon, a resident of Flushing, tried to win the reward and title of nobility by placing a charge of gunpowder beneath William's seat in church, but the explosion failed to occur. The Duke of Parma, one of William's most deadly enemies, released a French officer named LeGoth from prison, for the express purpose of poisoning the prince. Instead of doing this, he exposed the plot, and became one of his most faithful and devoted followers.

But the Prince of Orange did not bear a charmed life, and he was unable to escape the cupidity that the promised reward aroused in thousands of murderous hearts. The sixth attempt proved successful. It was made at noon on Tuesday, July 10, 1584. With his wife upon his arm, William was on his way to the dining-room, when a man named Balthhazar Gerard

approached and requested a passport. The prince appeared to think nothing of the very usual occurrence, and paid no regard to the whispered admonition of his wife, "I have never seen so villainous a countenance," but directed his secretary to give Gerard the document he had requested. This done, he passed on into the dining-room, where he engaged in cheerful conversation with a number of friends who sat at the table with him. This apartment was on the first floor of the palace, and connected with an ante-room from which a flight of stairs led to the prince's rooms above. In this ante-room, in the shadow of an archway, Gerard had succeeded in ensconcing himself, and here he awaited the appearance of his victim. The foot of the prince had only reached the first stair, when the report of a pistol rang out, and William of Orange fell backward into the arms of Jacob Van Waldere. Death was almost instantaneous, yet, before he expired, he exclaimed: "My God, have pity on my soul! My God, have pity on this poor people!" The assassin made an effort to escape, but was intercepted, overpowered and thrown into prison. Four days later the wretch who had taken the life of one of the best and truest of men paid a fearful penalty for his awful crime. The spectacle would have wrung the heart of the brave, yet gentle William of Orange. He had previously been subjected to the torture of having some of his joints dislocated by the rack, and his body seamed and scarred by flames. Nevertheless, although suffering intense pain, he ascended the scaffold calmly and unhesitatingly. His right hand was burned off by a red-hot iron, yet, although suffering the most excruciating agony, not a groan escaped his lips. Red-hot pincers then tore the flesh from his body in six different places. His abdomen was next cut open, and the bowels torn out. His legs and arms were then chopped off close to the trunk of his body. He yet lived. He ceased to breathe only when his heart had been cut out and thrown in his face. Finally the head was severed from the body, and the sentence had been executed.

The soil of France seems to have been fruitful in bringing forth assassins, particularly those whose murderous impulse

took the form of avenging certain real, or imaginary, political offenses.

A desperate attempt was made in December, 1800, to compass the death of Napoleon Bonaparte, while he was yet First Consul. It had been publicly announced that, on a certain evening, Napoleon would attend the opera, and this occasion was seized upon as a favorable time for the consummation of a plot, formed by three men, to assassinate him. Their attempt, while it antedated the use of bombs for like purposes, was in the same devilish line. They procured a barrel, which they filled with gunpowder and grape-shot. This they placed upon a cart, which, with many others, was drawn up at the side of one of the streets along which the state carriage would necessarily pass. One of the conspirators, St. Regent by name, was left in charge of the cart and its unique engine of destruction, while his companions repaired to the neighborhood of the Tulleries, where Bonaparte had recently taken up his residence, that they might be able to notify him of the starting of Napoleon's carriage. It appears that the life of the "man of destiny" was saved through the convivial habits of his coachman. He had been drinking, it was afterward shown, and drove with such unusual rapidity that the two spies were unable to keep in advance of the carriage. St. Regent did not perceive the carriage until it was almost upon him. As quickly as possible he lighted the fuse and prepared to save himself by running, but his progress was obstructed by the passing of a detachment of cavalry, and the explosion occurred while he was yet near the spot. The results were absolutely appalling, and fairly surpassed the carnage produced by our modern dynamite bombs. The fronts of some forty houses were completely wrecked, twenty persons were killed and fifty-two wounded, among the latter being St. Regent himself. Bonaparte escaped entirely uninjured.

Louis Philippe, King of France, was five times assaulted with murderous intent, but each time had the good fortune to escape. One of these assaults was undertaken by Damiens, known in history as the "Regicide," and is one of the most famous of all similar attempts ever made in Paris. The mur-

derous assault was made on a cold winter's evening in 1840, when the King appeared wrapped in two fur-lined overcoats. As he was in the act of stepping into his coach, Damiens slipped through the surrounding guards and stabbed Louis Philippe. The heavy coats worn by the monarch alone saved him from instant death. Damiens was at once overpowered and identified by the King, who said: "He is the man; arrest him, but do him no harm." The would-be assassin was put to death in a most cruel manner.

Of all the attempts to take the life of Louis Philippe, the most extraordinary and ingenious was that made by Fieschi, who devised and constructed an infernal machine, which in some respects resembled the present Gatling gun. He rented a room in a street through which the King was accustomed to pass, either in his carriage or on horseback, and there proceeded to construct his engine of destruction. Behind the blind of one of the windows he arranged twenty-five gun-barrels, diverging from a common centre like the ribs of a fan, and so leveled as to command the entire width of the street for some distance. He loaded each of the barrels with a heavy charge of gunpowder and four bullets. A train of powder was connected with the infernal machine in such a manner that they could all be simultaneously discharged. Fieschi selected the anniversary of the King's coronation as the occasion for "removing" him, as a grand procession was to pass along the Boulevard du Temple, where the assassin had erected his deadly battery of guns. When Fieschi judged that the auspicious moment had arrived, he opened the blind and applied the match. The result was a veritable massacre, no less than forty persons falling, dead and wounded, to the pavement. The horse ridden by the King was shot through the neck, but Louis Philippe escaped uninjured, except that a bullet slightly grazed his cheek. In addition to the cases detailed, the life of this monarch was attempted by Aliband in 1836, and by Le Compte and Henri in 1846.

An assassination that has passed as a most remarkable occurrence into French history, and that of the world, for that matter, was the killing of Marat by Marie Anne Charlotte

Corday D'Armans, known to the world as Charlotte Corday. Marat was one of the foremost men of the French Revolution, dividing the rather doubtful honor with Danton and Robespierre. Charlotte was born at St. Saturnin in 1768. She came of an old and quite aristocratic family, but seems to have early imbibed republican and revolutionary principles. Notwithstanding this, she became horrified at the acts of the Jacobins. Her hatred of this murderous party was intensified by acquaintance with a number of proscribed Girondists, who fled to Normandy for safety. Bitter in her hatred, yet lofty in her ideas of the rights of man, she resolved to rid the country of at least one of the oppressors who were putting the people to death by wholesale. Accordingly, she made ready for her journey to Paris. Charlotte was poor, and is said to have traveled the entire distance, nearly two hundred miles, on foot. She seems not to have definitely determined whether to take the life of Robespierre or Marat, but an act of extreme cruelty on the part of the latter, the demanding by him of one hundred or two hundred thousand more victims for the guillotine, decided her in his favor. With the little money she still possessed, she purchased a knife and called upon the "Father of the people," as Marat was then known by his adherents. Twice she was unsuccessful, but the third time found Marat at home.

The man who had consigned scores, yes, hundreds, of the people to an infamous death, was in a sitting bath, engaged in writing on a board. This was upon July 13, 1793. She gained admission upon the statement that she had important news from Caen to communicate. If she lacked anything of courage and determination to accomplish her design, she was reinforced by a remark of Marat's to the effect that the Girondists, some of whom were Charlotte's friends, who had fled to Normandy, were shortly to be guillotined. Drawing her knife, she plunged it into the heart of the monster who had given himself up to a passion for human blood, and he expired with a single groan.

Charlotte was promptly arrested and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, where she justified her act and

gloried in its consummation. As a matter of course, she was promptly condemned to the guillotine, the sentence being carried into effect on July 17, 1793. Sanson, the public executioner of Paris, in his memoirs declares that she met her death with the most perfect complacency. After her head fell into the basket, one of the attendants—a most brutal and inhuman wretch—lifted it up by the hair and struck the beautiful face. Sanson asserts that the face flushed with indignation.

A romantic incident attended the death of Charlotte Corday. A young Parisian enthusiast, named Adam Lux, hearing, in common with all Paris, of the assassination, attended her trial, and fell violently in love with her. He was present also at her execution, and determined to join her in the next world. Accordingly, he hastened to make certain declarations that, as he well knew, would lead to his immediate arrest, condemnation and execution. He expressed himself as glad to yield up his life, and died expecting to be speedily united to the object of his affection. Modern novelists and dramatists have represented Adam Lux as being the accepted suitor of Charlotte Corday, but there is no evidence that the two ever exchanged a single word.

During the days of the last French Empire, upon January 14, 1858, a carefully-planned attempt was made upon the life of the Emperor, Louis Napoleon. The principal conspirators were Italians known as Orsini, Pierre, Gomez and Rudio. To accomplish their design, which meant the destruction of the empire, they had pear-shaped hand-grenades specially manufactured, upon some pretext or another, in Birmingham, England. These were filled with a powerful explosive, on the larger end forty-five nipples being arranged, suitable to carry an ordinary percussion cap. The announcement having been made that the Emperor, accompanied by the royal suite, was to pass along a certain avenue on their way to the grand opera, Orsini and his accomplices took their stand at a convenient and commanding point. When the carriage containing the royal couple arrived, the assassins promptly threw their deadly bombs. The carriage was shattered into frag-

ments, and one of the horses killed, but Napoleon and Eugenie escaped entirely uninjured. Two footmen were killed outright, however, and a large number of people wounded.

One of the latest assassinations of note in France occurred at Lyons, on the evening of June 24, 1894, Marie Francois Sadi-Carnot, President of France, being stabbed to death by a young Italian anarchist named Caserio Geronemo. President Carnot was at Lyons in connection with the International Exposition, being held there. Shortly after nine o'clock in the evening, as he was being driven to the theatre, Caserio, as he was called, leaped upon the step of the carriage and stabbed President Carnot with a poniard so severely that he died shortly after twelve o'clock that night. Caserio was rescued from the fury of the populace with considerable difficulty, and lodged in prison.

President Carnot was born in 1837, and had filled several important public places before his election to the presidency, December 3, 1887. He was a man of marked ability and high integrity. His death was most sincerely mourned by the French people.

Caserio was arraigned for trial at Lyons, August 2, 1894. He assumed an air of bravado, and acknowledged himself the assassin of M. Carnot. He was a fanatical anarchist, and killed the French President to avenge the execution of three noted anarchists, Ravochal, Vallant and Henri. He claimed to have had no accomplices, yet one Granier, an associate of his, committed suicide by disemboweling himself, June 28, 1894, rather than submit to arrest.

Caserio was guillotined very early in the morning of August 16, 1894. When brought face to face with death, all his bravado left him, and his cowardly nature showed itself in its true colors. It was found necessary to carry him to the guillotine.

On October 25, 1878, an attempt was made to assassinate King Alfonso of Spain, who had just returned to Madrid after a month's absence upon a tour of inspection through the northern provinces of his kingdom. On that day he had

reviewed, in the presence of Ex-President Grant and several distinguished French and German officers, that portion of the standing army which was stationed at the capital. As the young King passed through the streets from the field of review, he was welcomed by the plaudits and acclamations of the vast crowd which thronged the strcets. Ladies waved their handkerchiefs and fans, while flowers were showered upon him from the balconies. Suddenly a young man pushed his way to the front, and fired a pistol point-blank at Alfonso. The bullet missed the mark, and the would-be murderer was instantly seized. His name was Juan Oliva Moncari; he was a cooper, twenty-five years of age. In his own native district of Tarragona, Moncari was known as a rabid revolutionist. He was as cool as he was daring, and stated that he did not feel a single pang of remorse, that he had meditated the crime for a long period, and had come to Madrid expressly to carry it into execution.

The ancient inhabitants of Britain were a quarrelsome and revengeful people, and assassination was often the end of the kings and chiefs who divided the territory and fought each other to the death, to maintain what they had often ruthlessly seized. The hatred of oppression and the love of liberty, inherent in the Anglo-Saxon race, wherever it exists, reached a crisis in the days of King John, surnamed Lackland, who was born in 1160, and although the youngest of the five sons of Henry II.—the monster who procured the assassination of Thomas à Becket—ascended the throne of England in 1199. By his oppressive acts John arrayed against himself the free barons of England, who defeated him in battle, and at Runnymede, on the 15th of June, 1215, forced him to sign Magna Charta—the Great Charter—upon which the libertics, not only of Great Britain, but of the United States as well, are primarily based. We who enjoy constitutional liberty owe a debt to those ancient warriors who secured the first genuine concession from the hereditary kings of England. The concluding lines of an inscription written by Mark Aikenside for a column at Runnymede—which has never been erected—may well be quoted:

"This is the place where England's ancient barons,
Clad in arms and stern with conquest,
From their tyrant king, then rendered tame,
Did challenge and procure the charter of thy freedom.
Pass not on till thou has blessed their memory
And paid those duties God appointed the reward
Of public virtue. And if chance thy house
Salute thee with a father's honored name,
Go, call thy sons, instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors, and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down entire
Those sacred rights to which they themselves were born.

From the days of John, greater liberty was enjoyed in England, and assassinations of royal personages decreased in number. John, himself, was a murderer and an employer of assassins. One of the most detestable of all his infamous acts was the assassination of Maud Witzwalter, known as "Maud the Fair." She was said to be the most beautiful woman in all England, and arrested the attention of King John. But Maud proved decidedly different from most of the ladies of the depraved court; she repulsed the advances of the king, and incurred the royal displeasure. By order of John, she was confined in the highest, coldest and least comfortable of all the cheerless chambers of the Tower of London, where so many unfortunates have spent their last hours.

If the sensual monarch imagined that such severe proceedings would conquer the virtue enthroned in the heart of the fair captive, he was doomed to disappointment. Satisfied on this point, John decided that she should pay for her refusal with her life. For a long time she was left without sustenance of any kind, and then given poisoned food upon which to break her fast. She speedily died, and added one more victim to the long list of women murdered by this infamous wretch.

One of the most cruel of all the acts of this man, who stopped at no crime to pander to his passions or further his ambitious designs, was the assassination of Prince Arthur. Arthur was the son of Geoffrey, John's elder brother, and was lineally the rightful heir to the throne. At that time, however, the law of primogeniture was not as well established as

at present; but Arthur had many powerful supporters, among them Philip, King of France. At the time when John ascended the throne, Arthur, who was a posthumous child, was but twelve years of age, and a handsome, engaging youth. While yet a boy, Arthur, supported by King Philip, took the field to obtain his rights. Through a mean stratagem of John, he was taken prisoner and thrown into the castle of Falaise, in Normandy. Thither John sent a hired assassin to kill the young prince and another to burn out his handsome eyes. But Herbert de Bourg, the warden of the castle, moved by the entreaties of the youthful prisoner, prevented the consummation of the infamous plans.

Arthur was soon removed from the custody of the tender-hearted Herbert, whom Shakespeare has immortalized, and lodged in another prison. Here the boy was murdered, exactly how is not entirely clear, although it is said by some historians that he was put to death by John himself, who drowned him in the river. The King paid dearly for his baseness, Philip of France seizing the greater portion of his continental possessions.

Several attempts upon the lives of royal personages in England have been made within comparatively recent years. On the evening of May 15, 1800, the life of George III. was placed in jeopardy by the act of a would-be regicide. Drury Lane Theatre, then the leading place of amusement in London, was the scene of the attempt. The announcement had been made that the King would be present that night, and the theatre was literally packed. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the distinguished dramatist and orator, whose plays still hold audiences, and some of whose orations are, even now, regarded as models, was manager of the theatre and had made extraordinary preparations to receive and entertain the royal visitor. The King had hardly finished bowing in recognition of the storm of applause excited by his appearance in the box, when a pistol-shot rang out and a puff of smoke was seen to curl upward from the pit. The markmanship of the miscreant was very defective, and George escaped entirely uninjured. The would-be assassin was quickly seized, and, amid the wild-

est tumult, removed to the music room, under the stage. Here he was confronted by the Duke of York. Being interrogated as to his name and motives, the man said, turning to the duke: "My name is James Hatfield; God bless your Royal Highness; I like you very well; you are a good fellow." Soon afterward he added: "I bear no malice toward the King; I was tired of living; my plan was to get rid of it by some means or other; I did not intend anything against the king's life; I knew that an attempt would answer the purpose."

The scene in the theatre after the attempt at assassination was dramatic in the extreme. Even before the excitement had subsided, Mrs. Jordan, the most noted actress of her day, swept grandly down before the footlights, and, omitting the overture, instantly began to sing the national anthem. To this song, so dear to the heart of every loyal Briton, Sheridan had, upon the spur of the moment, added the following stanza:

"From every latent foe,
From the assassin's blow
God shield the King.
O'er him Thine arm extend,
For Britain's sake defend
Our Father, Prince and Friend,
God save the King."

Hatfield was brought to trial and was defended by Lord Erskine, one of the most famous advocates of England. The defense was insanity, and so strong a case was made that the jury, without leaving their box, returned a verdict of not guilty. The man was committed to an insane asylum, where he ended his days.

The first of several attempts upon the life of the present sovereign of Great Britain was made June 10, 1840. The assault was made by one Edward Oxford, a youth of nineteen, who fired two shots at Queen Victoria, as, accompanied by the Prince Consort, she was driving up Constitution Hill. Neither of the shots took effect. When a mere lad, Oxford, who was born at Birmingham, had come to London and found employment as pot-boy in a public house. He was subsequently promoted to the position of bar-man, and in this

capacity had served in several inns and tap-rooms in the metropolis. In April, 1840, he took lodgings in Lambeth, and began to frequent shooting-galleries in Leicester Square and on the Strand. He was arrested immediately after the firing, but manifested no unwillingness to accompany the officers, exclaiming, "It was I; I did it; I will give myself up; there is no occasion to use violence; I will go with you." Upon his examination before the Privy Council, he showed little concern. He seemed to have an insane craze for notoriety, and his complacency during the progress of his trial was extraordinary. When the indictment was read in court, he burst into loud and discordant peals of laughter. The evidence adduced in his trial developed the fact that his father had been repeatedly confined in institutions for the insane. He was acquitted upon the plea of insanity, and committed to an insane asylum for life.

Two years later, on May 30, 1842, the life of the Queen was again placed in jeopardy. This time the assault was made by a man named John Francis. He adopted the weapon employed by Oxford, and fired at Victoria from nearly the same place where the young bar-man had sought to gain notoriety. His motive appears to have been the same as that of his predecessor. He made no defense, and was convicted and sentenced to death, but was magnanimously pardoned by his intended victim. This act of royal clemency appears to have been ill-advised, for within five weeks she was again fired upon. This time her assailant was a mere boy, only sixteen years of age. He was a hunchback, named William Bean, of rather revolting appearance. One of the press reports of that day describes him as a "long, sickly, pale-faced youth, with light hair." Over one eye he wore a black patch, while his nose was disfigured by a repulsive scar. He was instantly seized by a lad about his own age named Dasset, who handed him over to the police. It transpired that the pistol he had employed was loaded with powder and pieces of a clay pipe. It might have been supposed that the Government would, by this time, have seen the importance of imposing a severe sentence, with a view of checking the epidemic of youthful

assassins; but such was not the case. Young Bean was merely charged with a misdemeanor, and escaped with eighteen months imprisonment at hard labor.

Once more the Queen of England was a target for an assassin. On the evening of May 19, 1849, accompanied by three of her children, she was driving in an open carriage along one of the principal streets of London, when one William Hamilton, an Irish bricklayer, discharged a pistol at her. On the 14th day of the following month he was arraigned for trial. Hamilton entered a plea of guilty, and was sentenced to seven years penal servitude.

In this connection it seems to be worth while to mention an attempt to take the life of Sir Robert Peel. This was made on January 20, 1848, by a man named Daniel McNaughton, who had conceived an almost insane dislike to the Prime Minister. On the day named, McNaughton took up a position in Downing Street, awaiting the approach of Sir Robert to the Government House on that thoroughfare. A Mr. Drummond, who resided in Downing Street, happened to be returning to his residence. The assassin mistook him for his intended victim, and, approaching from behind, shot him in the back. Mr. Drummond survived for only five days. The defense of the murderer was undertaken by Mr. Alexander, afterward Lord Cockburn, who later became the Chief Justice of England, and well known to the American people, by reason of his connection with the prosecution by the United States of the Alabama Claims. The eminent advocate secured an acquittal of his client, and his success upon this occasion was always regarded by him as one of the most brilliant of his long career at the bar. The plea he offered in McNaughton's behalf was temporary insanity, and so ably did he urge it that the judges presiding at the trial directed the jury to bring in a verdict of "not guilty," and the man was allowed to go free, to commit a similar offense in the future should his homicidal impulses impel him thereto.

Several of the rulers of modern Russia have died violent deaths. This is in part chargeable to the passionate nature of the people of that country, but principally to the arbitrary

government of the Czars, who have long ruled in a cruel and oppressive manner, exercising almost absolute power. The Emperor Paul fell at the hands of assassins. Efforts have been made to show that his death was not deliberately planned, but there is little doubt but what such was the case. He was the son of the unfortunate Peter III., who was assassinated in 1762 by Alexis Orloff, acting in connection with his brother Gregori, for which murderous act they both received high honors and great pecuniary rewards. His mother was the brilliant but infamous Catherine II.

The son of such a woman as Catherine could not well be other than cruel and revengeful. She had kept him in constant restraint, and when, upon her death in 1796, he ascended the throne, he was very poorly equipped for the high duties that awaited him. Mr. Carr, in his very entertaining and instructive work, "A Northern Tour," has given the following graphic account of the assassination of Paul, which occurred on the night of March 24, 1801.

"The Emperor had been worried by some apprehension of mischief, and took a more than usually affectionate farewell of his wife and children in the fatal night. He lay down as usual, in his regimentals and boots, and his guards took up their posts before his chamber door. Silence, at length, reigned throughout the palace, except when it was disturbed by the pacing of the sentinels, or the murmurs of the Neva. In the dead of the night nine conspirators passed the drawbridge and made their way stealthily up the staircase to the emperor's chamber, where, by this time, the guards had been changed by the contrivance of the assassins, all but one faithful hussar, who had the distinction of always sleeping at the bedroom door of his Imperial Master, in an ante-room. This man it had been found impossible to corrupt, and when the conspirators entered the ante-chamber, he challenged them, and was immediately cut down. As the whole party rushed in, the emperor sprang from his couch. At first, the helpless monarch endeavored to find shelter behind the tables and chairs. Then, for a moment, recovering his self-possession, he assumed a tone of authority. He declared they were his

prisoners, and called upon them to surrender. When the merciless ring closed around him, however, the wretched man began to beg so piteously for his life that one of the conspirators relented, and for a moment seemed half inclined to side with the victim. Paul offered to relinquish the sceptre, promising to make them all princes and give them estates. He realized that all this was vain, and plunged madly for the window, which he attempted to break through, fearfully gashing his hands in the struggle. Dragged back from the window, he seized a chair and fought desperately with it. 'We have passed the Rubicon,' said one of the conspirators; 'if we spare his life, before the setting of to-morrow's sun we shall be his victims.' Thus rallied, the murderers passed a sash around the neck of the struggling Emperor, and in another minute or two all was over, and the conspirators dispersed quickly to their homes."

The Emperor Alexander II., sometimes called the "Emancipator," by reason of his having freed the serfs of Russia, escaped from so many murderous assaults that the people began to think he bore a charmed life and was proof against the plots of the Nihilists, and, indeed, there was much in his remarkable career to justify this belief on the part of credulous and superstitious people.

At the gate of the Summer Garden in St. Petersburg there is an image of the Virgin, upon the base of which is engraved the inscription, "Touch not mine anointed." Upon the ground where it stands the first attempt was made upon the life of Alexander II., on April 16, 1866. The assassins failed in the accomplishment of their purpose, but another attempt was made upon the 6th day of June in the following year, while the czar was driving with Napoleon III. in Paris. There is little doubt that the attack last mentioned was made by men who had at one time owed natural allegiance to his throne, but who had expatriated themselves either because of hatred for the ruling monarch, or on account of having committed some crime. On December 4, 1879, Alexander passed safely over a railroad whose track had been undermined, and beneath which had been placed explosives intended

to destroy him. Two years later, the dining-room of the Winter Palace, in which he was expected to have taken his evening meal, was blown up and nine soldiers were killed.

These remarkable escapes seem to have convinced the Nihilists that they must resort to strategy, rather than open violence, to accomplish their purpose, the "removal" of a man whom they doubtless honestly believed to be a foe to Russian liberty and Russian advancement. It being known that the Emperor was a sufferer from asthma, some member of the organization, doubtless acting under instructions from a higher authority in the order, sent him a box of pills, presumably as a remedy for this complaint. The box was opened and carefully investigated, and was found to be filled with an explosive substance in a quantity sufficient to have caused the death of at least a dozen persons. Soon afterward, he received a petition, which, upon examination, was found to have been sprinkled with a poisonous powder.

Although the Czar was undoubtedly a brave man, these occurrences could not but have most seriously affected him. Threatened with death at every turn, and doubtful of the good faith of his very servants and intimate associates—for Nihilism had permeated the highest ranks of the nobility—it is not to be wondered that Alexander became excessively nervous. Under this terrible mental strain the strong constitution of the emperor began to weaken, his face became haggard, and his disposition irritable and morose. At length, however, his native manliness asserted itself, and, like one afflicted with an incurable disease, who looks his impending fate fairly in the face, Alexander resolved to be master of his own actions, to enjoy what remained to him of life, and, like Socrates, "accept with complacency the inevitable." He positively refused to adopt any of the precautions which the police of St. Petersburg were inclined to throw around his royal person. "I am a man," he said; "I will go and come as I please; I will eat and drink what I like, and do as I choose. If I am to be murdered in the end, that is the destiny which God himself has reserved for me. I have already lived longer than any of my race; as to death, I do not personally fear it."

It was thought necessary, however, to guard the person of the Czar with the presence of one of his most devoted friends, and for this delicate office the Count Louis Melikoff was selected. No further effort was put forth by his family to control his actions, except so far as might be conducted by ordinary principles of prudence, and the czar was left to the exercise of his own free will.

On March 13, 1881, the Princess Dolgorouki, who, after more or less scandal at the court, had become the second wife of the emperor, received a warning that her husband was to be made the victim of assassination upon that day; meanwhile, the czar was eating what he chose, drinking what he liked and going where he pleased, just as would any free and untrammeled citizen of our own republic, who feared nothing in consequence of the free exercise of his will.

Nevertheless, on the day when the princess received this communication, in her anxiety for the welfare of her imperial consort, she solicited him to remain at home. The temper of Alexander would not brook the pleadings of a devoted wife, nor was his intellect convinced by the arguments of Melikoff, and he went to witness one of those gorgeous military parades for which St. Petersburg has long been distinguished, that was to occur upon the parade ground of the Michel Manage. He was expected to drive from this parade ground to the Winter Palace along the Neosky Prospect. On this day, however, he chose a route running along the bank of the Catherine Canal. On the way to the palace, the czar, riding in a carriage, was the centre of a rapidly-moving group, in whose ranks were included many officers of the imperial household, mounted on horseback; he had reached a point near the stable bridge which spans the canal, when, at a moment and in a manner entirely unexpected, he received his death wound. From under the garden wall of the Michel Palace there sprang a man in the dress of a peasant, who had been patiently waiting the arrival of the imperial party, by the bank of the canal. This man, as the Czar's carriage passed, threw a bomb with such fatal effect that, falling behind the carriage, it shattered the back of the vehicle, killed and wounded several soldiers

and bystanders, and threw the fragments of the carriage over the monarch's head. Alexander, nevertheless, was unhurt, and at once stepped from the vehicle to assist a wounded soldier. Scarcely two minutes had elapsed when another man, a confederate of the first, threw a second bomb from the archway of the gate leading into the Summer Garden. This missile fell at the feet of the Czar and wrought a havoc which the thrower could have scarcely expected. Columns of glittering snow arose high in the air, interspersed with which were flying fragments of wood and glass; the windows of the imperial stables broke with a crashing reverberation upon the still air, blown into myriads of pieces; the white mantle of the earth, gleaming with refractions such as diamonds themselves can scarcely produce, was dyed red with the blood which flowed from the death wounds of twenty killed and wounded men. Among those who perished was the man who had thrown the second bomb, destroyed by his own weapon. The lower limbs of the Czar were fearfully shattered, and his left eye was bulging from its socket; his clothing was literally in rags and tatters. When those around him tenderly raised his prostrate form, he feebly lifted his right hand, from which the blood was gushing, toward his forehead, and murmured, "Holodus, holodus," (Cold, cold). The Grand Duke Michael, whose heart was filled with sympathy, quickly seized a cap from one of the bystanders and placed it upon the head of the czar. The dying man said, in a broken voice, "To the palace—quick; die there." He was placed upon a sledge, with his head, which was covered with blood, resting upon the breast of the chief of police, and was driven rapidly to the Winter Palace, where he expired about four o'clock that day.

No Emperor of Germany has ever been more warmly beloved by his subjects, or more generally respected by the world at large, than William I. Supported by one of the ablest prime ministers of modern times, Prince Bismarck, he accomplished the unification of the German Empire and blended into one common bond the hearts and allegiance of all those who were naturally related through the inheritance of German blood, or the use of the German tongue. It was he

who led the German armies upon their march which triumphed at Sedan and ended gloriously at Paris. His personal life was as free from scandal as his domestic relations were full of happiness. That he had made enemies is true; but, as a rule, the man who makes no enemies deserves no friends.

Although almost deified by the enthusiasts of Germany, but a few years passed before a dastardly attempt was made upon the life of this grand, yet simple-minded, old man. On May 11, 1878, a mere lad of nineteen, named Emil Max Hordel, attempted to take the life of the Emperor. Hordel was a native of Leipsic, and had manifested a wild disposition from his childhood. As a boy he had been guilty of imprudence and suspected of dishonesty. By trade he was a tinsmith, while so far as his political convictions went, he avowed himself to have been first a socialist, and later on an anarchist. He had repeatedly made the remark in public places, that "a certain thick-headed person might be disposed of very suddenly." To the taking of his photograph under police supervision, he interposed no objection. In fact, he assured the photographer that the time would come when tens of thousands of copies of his "false presentment" would be hawked about the streets of the German capital. As William was driving through that world-renowned avenue of Berlin known as "Unter den Linden," young Hordel fired upon him, discharging two barrels of his revolver without effect. He was speedily tried and sentenced to death, receiving his sentence with a sneer of contempt. His execution, which was by decapitation, took place in the courtyard of the New Prison at Berlin, on Friday, August 18, 1878.

Before punishment was meted out to Hordel, indeed, only three weeks after the futile attempt of the youthful tinsmith, the Emperor was fired upon from a window near the scene of the former murderous assault. The would-be assassin was one Dr. Karl Nobling, a man of liberal education and considerable scientific attainments. The weapon employed was a double-barreled shotgun, both barrels of which were discharged. The Emperor was riding alone in the royal carriage, accompanied by a few personal guards. About thirty shots

lodged in the person of William, chiefly in the arms and back, but his injuries were not serious. The apartments of the wretch were at once broken open. Nobling fired upon and wounded the keeper of the hotel, who accompanied the guards in their search. Rather than submit to arrest he shot himself, and died from the effects of his wound on September 10th, following. The crime of Doctor Nobling was due solely to political fanaticism, as he was clearly an entirely sane man. His offense may be classed with the murderous acts of the Chicago anarchists, detailed in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

ASSASSINATIONS IN AMERICA—THE MAFIA

To the credit of America and her free institutions, few attempts have ever been made upon the lives of her public men, and yet two presidents of the United States have fallen at the hands of assassins.

On April 14, 1865, Abraham Lincoln, the best beloved and most gratefully remembered of any president since the days of Washington, was brutally assassinated by John Wilkes Booth, an actor, and a member of one of the most famous families of American tragedians. The death of the "Martyred President," as Lincoln is now very generally called, occurred at the close of the long and fiercely contested civil war, and threw a dark and impenetrable pall over the land, changing the rejoicings of millions of people into deep and heart-felt sorrow. On the ninth of April, 1865, General Lee surrendered his army to General Grant at Appomattox Court House, and the war was at an end. Mr. Lincoln returned from Richmond, Va., the occupation of which by the Federal troops on April 4th virtually ended the long struggle.

It is difficult to appreciate the feelings that must have swayed the heart of this truly great and patriotic man. Largely through his efforts, the nation had been preserved with its constitution intact, and without a single star having been lost from its glorious flag. Much remained, however, to be done, and no one better appreciated this than Lincoln himself. The wounds of a nation were still freshly bleeding, hardly a household in the land but mourned the untimely death of husband, father or son; the South was in a state of chaos, and must be reconstructed. These matters filled Lincoln's mind after his return from Richmond. He had already

suggested something of his plans, and was anxious to begin the work of restoring the rule of law and order throughout the country.

It has often been charged that the horrid conspiracy that cost the nation its Chief Magistrate had its origin with the leaders of the great Rebellion. There were some grounds for this belief at the time, and President Johnson was doubtless justified in the proclamation he issued on the second day of May, declaring that the assassination was chargeable to acts of Jefferson Davis, Jacob Thompson and other officials of the late Southern Confederacy, and offering large rewards for their arrest. As a matter of fact, nothing could have happened more disastrous to the interests of the Southern people than the death of President Lincoln. He had promised them fair treatment, and the people of the South had learned that he was a man of his word. On the other hand, they had every reason to distrust the Vice-President, Andrew Johnson. A Southern man himself, he was regarded as a renegade to his section, and was hated by every genuine secessionist. As military governor of Tennessee he had acted in an arbitrary manner, and the South had nothing to hope for at his hands. The tragic death of Lincoln sent a thrill of dismay through the breasts of those who had lately been in rebellion against the government. They knew that the assassination would be charged to their account, and that their political prospects had been injured, if not absolutely blasted. Looked at in this light, it seems certain that Lincoln did not fall at the instigation of Southern men.

On that fatal 14th of April, the President was in a happy, though thoughtful, mood. At breakfast, he conversed with his son Robert; between eleven and twelve o'clock, he attended a cabinet meeting, at which General Grant was present, and all remarked his cheerful appearance and afterwards testified that he expressed the kindliest feelings and the most liberal intentions toward the South. Later in the day, he drove out with Mrs. Lincoln. On that occasion he said to his wife: "We have had a hard time together since we came to Washington, but now the war is over, and with God's blessing

upon us, we may hope for four years of happiness, and then we will go back to Illinois, and pass the remainder of our lives in peace."

The press had prominently announced that the President and General Grant would, that evening, attend Ford's Theatre in Washington, where the play of "Our American Cousin" was to be presented. A previous engagement of General Grant prevented his accompanying the President, and was, no doubt, the means of saving his life to the nation, since it is almost certain that his death as well as that of Lincoln had been decreed. Mr. Lincoln, his wife and party arrived about nine o'clock, and were received by the immense audience with every manifestation of delight. In the midst of the play, a shot rang out, and a man, holding a bloody dagger in his hand, leaped from the President's box to the stage, shouted out the motto of the State of Virginia, "*Sic Semper Tyrannis*" —Ever so to tyrants—and disappeared behind the scene. The blood upon the dagger was that of Major Rathbone, who was one of the President's party. He had seized the assassin, who cut him quite severely in the arm and broke away. Mr. Lincoln fell forward into the arms of his wife. The first surgeon to arrive announced the wound mortal, a bullet having penetrated his brain. He was removed to a house in the neighborhood, where he died about seven o'clock the following morning, without having recovered consciousness.

The assassin of President Lincoln, and the real head of the conspiracy, was John Wilkes Booth, an actor of ability, the son of Junius Brutus Booth, and the brother of the late Edwin Booth, both of whom were among the foremost of all the tragedians of America. On the same night that the actor accomplished his foul design, a desperate attempt was made to take the life of William H. Seward, Secretary of State. A wretch known as Payne, but whose real name was Powell, forced his way into the house where the secretary was confined to his bed by reason of injuries received by being thrown from his carriage, and attacked Mr. Seward in his bed, cutting and stabbing him terribly. His life was only saved through the heroic efforts of his sons and daughter and a nurse named

Robinson. Frederick Seward, one of the secretary's sons, was struck a blow on the head with a pistol which fractured his skull and rendered him insensible.

In tragically leaping upon the stage, Booth became entangled in some of the decorations, in consequence of which he did not alight fairly upon his feet, and a bone in one of his legs was broken. Notwithstanding this, he made his way to the stage entrance of the theatre, where a horse was in waiting, upon which he escaped from the city. The assassin remained a week in hiding, his fractured leg having been set in the meantime by Dr. Mudd. On the 21st of April, a party of soldiers located him in a barn, where he had concealed himself, together with one of the conspirators named Herold. After a number of shots had been exchanged, the party fired the barn, whereupon Herold came out and surrendered himself, but Booth refused to do so. Standing almost in the flames, he leaned upon his crutch and opened fire upon his would be captors, whereupon a soldier named Boston Corbett killed him with a shot from a revolver, for which act he was severely censured, as the orders were to take Booth alive. At the time of his death, the assassin was but twenty-six years old.

A number of persons were arrested, and evidences of a deep-laid plot to assassinate, not only the President and secretary of state, but a number of other prominent public men, was speedily discovered. The conspirators met at the house of a Mrs. Surratt in Washington, where their diabolical schemes were concocted and developed. As the result of a rather remarkable trial, before a military commission, five persons were convicted of conspiring to take the life of Abraham Lincoln: Mrs. Surratt, Herold, Payne, Alzerodt and Dr. Mudd. The three first named were executed, while the others were sent to the Dry Tortugas for life, where Alzerodt died soon after; Dr. Mudd being ultimately pardoned.

There were grave doubts in the minds of many people as to the extent of Mrs. Surratt's guilt, and strong efforts were made to save her life, but President Johnson refused to commute her sentence, and she died with the others.

John Surratt, the son of Mrs. Surratt, and one of the conspirators, succeeded in escaping from the country and reaching Italy, where he entered the Papal Guards. Afterwards he was recognized by an American, Archbishop Hughes, and surrendered to the Government of the United States. Surratt was twice tried in Washington. The first trial resulted in a disagreement of the jury, and upon the second he escaped by pleading the statute of limitations.

On Saturday, July 2, 1881, the pistol of an assassin, for the second time, laid low a president of the United States. James A. Garfield, who had filled that high position but four months, was shot in the depot of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, in the city of Washington. The President was about to leave the capital to attend the commencement exercises of his Alma Mater, Williams College, at Williamstown, Massachusetts, and was accompanied by James G. Blaine, his secretary of state. The assassin, one Charles Julius Guiteau, fired twice at Mr. Garfield, the second shot tearing a jagged hole in his side from which the blood fairly spouted.

Guiteau made an effort to escape, but ran into the arms of a policeman, who placed him under arrest. In his pocket was found the following letter:

"July 2, 1881.

"To the White House.—The President's tragic death was a sad necessity, but it will unite the Republican party, and save the Republic. Life is a flimsy dream, and it matters little when one goes. A human life is of small value. During the war thousands of brave boys went down without a tear.

"I presume the President was a Christian, and that he will be happier in Paradise than here. It will be no worse for Mrs. Garfield, dear soul, to part with her husband this way than by natural death. He is liable to go at any time, anyway. I had no ill-will toward the President. His death was a political necessity.

"I am a lawyer, a theologian, and a politician. I am a Stalwart of the Stalwarts. I was with General Grant and the rest of our men, in New York, during the canvass. I have some papers for the press, which I shall leave with Byron Andrews, and his co-journalists, at 1420 New York Avenue, where all the reporters can see them. I am going to the jail.

"Charles Guiteau."

Some time after the murder, District-Attorney Corkhill, after a thorough investigation, published a statement which is a very accurate account of the movements of the assassin from the day he reached Washington down to the time of the murderous assault. It is given here entire:

"The interest felt by the public in the details of the assassination, and the many stories published, justify me in stating that the following is a correct and accurate statement concerning the points to which reference has been made: The assassin, Charles Guiteau, came to Washington City on Sunday evening, March 6, 1881, and stopped at the Ebbitt House, remaining only one day. He then secured a room in another part of the city, and had boarded and roomed at various places, the full details of which I have. On Wednesday, May 18, 1881, the assassin determined to murder the President. He had neither money nor pistol at the time. About the last of May he went into O'Meara's store, corner of Fifteenth and F. streets, this city, and examined some pistols, asking for the largest calibre. He was shown two similar in calibre, and only different in price. On Wednesday, June 8th, he purchased a pistol for which he paid $10, he having, in the meantime, borrowed $15 of a gentleman in this city, on the plea that he wanted to pay his board bill. On the same evening, about seven o'clock, he took the pistol and went to the foot of Seventeenth Street, and practiced firing at a board, firing ten shots. He then returned to his boarding-house and wiped the pistol dry, wrapped it in his coat, and waited his opportunity. On Sunday morning, June 15th, he was sitting in Lafayette Park, and saw the President leave for the Christian Church on Vermont Avenue, and he at once returned to his room, obtained his pistol, put it in his pocket, and followed the President to church. He entered the church, but found he could not kill him there without danger of killing some one else. He noticed that the President sat near a window. After church he made an examination of the window, and found he could reach it without any trouble, and that from this point he could shoot the President through the head without killing any one else. The following Wednesday, he

went to church, examined the location and the window, and became satisfied he could accomplish his purpose. He determined to make the attempt at the church the following Sunday.

"Learning from the papers that the President would leave the city on Saturday, the 18th of June, with Mrs. Garfield, for Long Branch, he decided to meet him at the depot. He left his boarding-house about five o'clock Saturday morning, June 18th, and went down to the river at the foot of Seventeenth Street, and fired five shots to practice his aim, and be certain his pistol was in good order. He then went to the depot, with his pistol ready, when the presidential party entered. He says Mrs. Garfield looked so frail and weak that he had not the heart to shoot the President in her presence, and, as he knew he would have another opportunity, he left the depot. On Wednesday evening, the President and his son, and, I think, United States Marshal Henry, went out for a ride. The assassin took his pistol and followed them, and watched them for some time, in hopes the carriage would stop, but no opportunity was given. On Friday evening, July 1st, he was sitting on the seat in the park opposite the White House, when he saw the President come out alone. He followed him down the avenue to Fifteenth Street, and then kept on the opposite side of the street upon Fifteenth, until the President entered the residence of Secretary Blaine. He waited at the corner of Fifteenth and H. streets for some time, and then, as he was afraid he would attract attention, he went into the alley in the rear of Mr. Morton's residence, examined his pistol and waited. The President and Secretary Blaine came out together, and he followed over to the gate of the White House, but could get no opportunity to use his weapon. On the morning of Saturday, July 2d, he breakfasted at the Riggs House about seven o'clock. He then walked up into the park and rode to Sixth Street, got out and went into the depot, and loitered around there; had his shoes blacked; engaged a hackman for two dollars to take him to the jail; went into the water-closet and took his pistol out of his hip-pocket, and unwrapped the paper from around it, which he had put there

for the purpose of preventing the perspiration from the body dampening the powder; examined his pistol; carefully tried the trigger, and then returned and took a seat in the ladies' waiting room, and, as soon as the President entered, advanced behind him and fired two shots.

"These facts, I think, can be relied upon as accurate, and I give them to the public to contradict certain false rumors in connection with the most atrocious of atrocious crimes."

After languishing in great anguish for nearly three months, President Garfield died September 19, 1881, at Elberon, N. J. On Friday, October 14, 1881, Guiteau was arraigned on the charge of having murdered him. He was quite ably defended by his sister's husband, George Scoville, of the Chicago bar, the defense being insanity. The prisoner insisted on conducting his own case, and very frequently interrupted the proceedings of the court, which ruled that he could not do so. His antics and tirades were probably indulged in to sustain his defense of insanity, although he persisted that he was entirely sane, and that the killing of the President was necessary for the good of the country.

A large amount of expert medical testimony was introduced, which, as is usually the case, was of a highly contradictory character. Guiteau was found guilty, and on February 4, 1882, was sentenced to be hanged on the 30th of the following June. He was executed on that day, to the great satisfaction of nearly every citizen of the United States.

Guiteau was an intense egotist, and conceived a hatred for President Garfield, because certain services that he claimed to have rendered during the campaign preceding the election were not recognized. He was undoubtedly unbalanced in some regards, but there can be no doubt but what he knew the difference between right and wrong, and fully realized the enormity of his offense. It seems probable that the moving cause to his awful crime was a morbid desire for notoriety, coupled, perhaps, with an impulse to take life.

In 1893 the mayor of the city of Chicago, Carter H. Harrison, was murdered in much the same manner as President Garfield was assassinated, and from much the same cause.

While serving his fifth term as mayor, Harrison was shot down in his residence, on the evening of October 30, 1893, by one Patrick Eugene Prendergast. Mayor Harrison was very democratic in his habits, and was always accessible to callers, of whatever condition in life. Prendergast was shown into the library, and almost immediately opened fire upon his victim. The mayor fell desperately wounded to the floor, and expired almost immediately. The assassin fled from the house, but subsequently surrendered himself to the police.

As in the case of Guiteau, the defense offered for Prendergast was that of insanity. Between the two there were not wanting some striking points of resemblance; neither had any real motive for the perpetration of his crime, while each pretended that he had been prompted to the act because of the failure of the victim to keep certain promises of political preferment. Both were possessd of most inordinate egotism, and, in a certain sense, were lacking in understanding. Yet they unquestionably realized the extent of their wrongdoing, and, in the opinion of most candid and humane people, were rightly condemned. Prendergast was convicted and promptly executed.

In no country in the world, perhaps, is there a more striking contrast between the moral and material aspects than in the island of Sicily. Probably no Italian city presents a more charming picture to the eye of a traveler than does Palermo, with its attractive environments and its beautiful harbor, which has been poetically named the "Golden Shell." The fertile soil surrounding this picturesque old town slopes gently from the mountains to the sea, and affords the traveler a rare glimpse of natural beauty, heightened by the cultivation which has been bestowed upon the land by man. Lemon and orange groves, interspersed with orchards of almonds and fig trees, stretch out in every direction, and the air is laden with Nature's perfumes. To a stranger the scene appears like a terrestrial paradise, and he finds it difficult to believe that into such a garden any serpent of evil could obtain admission.

Yet, a traveler cannot be many days in Palermo without being startled by hearing innumerable tales of crimes of

violence. The citizens point out to him localities where murders have been committed for the most trivial causes, and his dreams are apt to be haunted by visions of red-handed assassins or their struggling victims. In fact, Sicily is better known to the world at large as the home of murderers than for the luxuriance of its vegetation or the natural beauty of the island itself.

There is no inherent reason why this state of affairs should exist. Nature has rendered it easy for the Sicilian to obtain a livelihood. Along the maritime belt which stretches from Palermo to Messina the growth of fruit is easy and attended by large profits. An Italian writer of some twenty years ago, Senor Francetti, is authority for the statement that one and one-half acres placed under cultivation as a lemon grove will, with proper care, yield an annual profit of five hundred dollars. Figs, than which few fruits are more refreshing, hang like berries along our hedge-rows. In January the black twigs of the almond trees are transformed into blooming sprays of white, which call to the mind the legend of St. Joseph's rod. It is true, however, that the interior of the island affords a striking contrast to this garden spot. There trees are few, and houses are sometimes leagues apart. But the natives, as a rule, live near the coast where nature smiles upon them, and, as it were, would seem to invite them to a life of peace. But there are moral causes at work more potent than the influence of nature or the teachings of religion, nor do those who may be supposed best qualified to judge predict any change for the better in the island of Sicily for many years to come. In the northeastern corner of the island a majority of the inhabitants are the descendants of the Arab and African races, and this admixture of blood does not produce people apt to entertain any particular repugnance to the taking of human life. Moreover, the country abounds with the descendants of the many bravos whom the nobles of Palermo once kept in their trains. This class probably cherished family traditions of violence and assassination. Palermo, the capital, and its vicinity, have been the particular theatre of disturbances. It has been said that the metropolis of a country may be

regarded as the very personification of its prevailing spirit, since there the moral tendencies of the people concentrate. Conceding the truth of this theory, it argues poorly for the morality of the Sicilians as a whole, that the picturesque city of Palermo should be the chief seat of the blood-thirsty order known as "The Mafia." It is there, too, that the hereditary hatreds of any standing vendetta of the middle ages are yet rife. Volumes might be filled with tales of the tragedies that have occurred during the past few years among these modern Montagues and Capulets. Not many years ago, the breaking out of a feud between two rival families in a little village in the district of Palermo, with the accompanying assassination of one of the chiefs of the hostile houses, brought about almost a civil war, and the sanguinary feud resulted in the perpetration of not less than thirty-five homicides in a single year. The peasants point out the localities of these crimes with an indifference born of familiarity. "Under this tree," one is told, "a poor bailiff was assassinated because he had been preferred by his employer to another applicant endorsed by one of the formidable associations of murderers with which the island abounded." "Where that road winds around the base of the vine-clad hill, the proprietor of the estate received the startling intimation that he had shown a contumacious spirit. A bullet was fired through his hat by a desperado concealed behind the rocks." A little further along the road, perhaps, is indicated a spot where a young man was shot dead on the highway. What had been his offense? He had been prominent in promoting works of public benefit, and was becoming too popular for the welfare of those in authority. Naturally enough, the American or average European, listening to these tales, is more or less incredulous. Their repetition, however, joined to his own knowledge of the history of Sicily derived from other sources, compels him to believe in their truth. It is not easy for the subject of any civilized power, and, least of all, for the citizen of any thoroughly constituted republic, to suppose that assassination could be rife in one of the provinces of Italy if the Italian government were strong enough to repress it. The theory upon which papal domination was

overturned was that all government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. Should the same principle be applied in its legitimate operation to the island of Sicily, it would be difficult to perceive under what theory the reigning monarch of Italy claimed ascendency over what has been, not inaptly, called the very garden of the kingdom. The truth is, that the moral tone of the Sicilian is so low that the vendetta is considered legitimate, and the decrees of secret societies banded together for the purpose of assassination, are regarded as of much more binding force and effect than are the judicial findings of the courts of law.

Anglo-Saxon and Teuton point to the middle classes as the mainstay and the fundamental prop of the government. In Sicily the middle class is, to say the least, very small, and its sympathies appear to have been, and to be, rather with the wrong-doers than with the officers of the law. The representatives of the Italian government upon the island find themselves seriously handicapped by the prevalence of this sympathy. In fact, if all seeming authentic reports are to be credited, they appear to be in doubt as to the limit of their authority, to be of the opinion that they exercise power only upon the sufferance of the islanders. The only exercise of authority with which they can be justly charged is to be found in spasmodic raids upon detached bands of assassins as to whose safety the leaders have little care. The Sicilian is naturally cunning. From his Greek ancestors he inherits a gift of diplomacy, while from his Saracen forefathers he derives the art of duplicity. Gifted with such a combination of faculties and supported by the moral sense of the community, he is more than a match for the slow-going, easily-persuaded representative of the government. Should the local administration undertake to advance investigation through invoking the aid of local celebrities, he is more than likely to find before he has completed his inquiry that he has been made merely an unreasoning tool for the better accomplishment of nefarious ends.

In no portion of Sicily is the organization known as "The Mafia" stronger than in Palermo. It must be admitted, how-

ever, that as to the precise character of this organization comparatively little information of a positively reliable character can be obtained. Many native Sicilians deny that it exists as an order, and allege that there is no stronger bond of union between the various societies upon the island than there was among the different bands of robbers which once made the crossing of Hounslow Heath a task of no little peril. On the other hand, some of those who profess to have carefully investigated the workings of the "Mafia" assert that the organization should be regarded as a unit, however multiform may be the parts under which it presents itself. These investigators claim to have discovered positive proof that the movements and policy of the entire body are under the control of, and directed by, a central authority. They also assert that many members of the order at Palermo are men of substance, of social standing, and of no little political influence. These leaders, it is said, display in the management of the society's affairs the rarest tact and the soundest judgment. It is they who select the subjects on whom is to be visited the wrath of the organization; it is they who determine to what extent the manifestations of the society's displeasure shall be made; whether by a threatening letter, a "shot of persuasion," or absolute murder. It is this social power, so it is said, which determines whether operations shall be directed against the person, or only against the property, or whether terror must be inspired by an increased ferocity. It is also asserted, and not without some show of plausibility, that the directorate of the Mafia manage and maintain, in some way, a direct influence over the government at Rome, where their agents succeed, by intrigue, in securing the removal of obnoxious officials and the appointment of those who may be manipulated by the organization.

If these allegations be well founded, the condition of affairs in Sicily is one not readily understood by the mind of the average man who has been reared in a country where civilization, if not religion, inspires respect for the constitutional authority. Yet, in this island, whose shores are washed by the warm and limpid waters of the Mediterranean, and whose

coast is kissed by the semi-tropical sun, popular sentiment abhors any resort to courts of law, while sanctioning and applauding the exercise of personal vengeance. Were it not for the existence of this sentiment in the community at large, the Mafia would find it impossible to prosper, even if it were not exterminated. The prevailing idea is that to invoke the aid of the courts, is the one crowning disgrace, the single unpardonable sin, which can be laid at the door of a Sicilian. Many are the poor workingmen of Palermo who have ended their lives in public hospitals, wounded in street brawls, who have passed into eternity with their lips sealed as to the names of their assailants, thus virtually becoming accessory after the fact to their own murders.

A somewhat remarkable illustration of the prevalence of this sentimental principle occurred a few years ago. A nobleman of Palermo, riding along the highway, was made the target for a fusillade of bullets from twelve or fourteen muskets, discharged from behind a stone wall. None of the shots happened to take effect, and no complaint was ever made by the nobleman to any magistrate, yet circumstances pointed very clearly to the identity of his would-be assassins, and within ten days each and all of them had perished at the hands of hired assassins. Indeed, it is this hiring of assassins which renders the operations of the Mafia at once more despicable and more dangerous. At the head of the order stands a man of wealth, of position and of influence. At the foot are the hired bravos, men of the criminal class, whose lives are usually already forfeited to justice, and who are insured of protection against the execution of the law upon condition that they prove faithful to their patrons.

On the other hand, there are those who have devoted no little attention to the investigation of the question, who say that the Mafia, as an integral unit, has no existence. That the term is applied, in a collective sort of way, to cover all associations, in whatever part of Sicily they may be located, which may look for the accomplishment of a certain end and use assassination as a means for its attainment. Thus, according to those writers, one band may have for its aim the manipula-

tion of the ballot-box; another the control of the sale and charge of the crown lands; and a third the influencing of the apportionment of contracts for public works, and so on. Should these societies be able to accomplish the objects for which they were respectively organized through legitimate agencies, well and good; if not, resort is had to the bullet or the dagger. Nor, so these investigators assert, is any secret made as to the character of the arguments to be ultimately employed.

In the city of Palermo men may be seen going about the streets with swaggering gait, a curt mode of speech, and wearing rakish-looking hats and long locks of hair, somewhat after the fashion of the old-time bravos; these are ordinarily supposed to be either members of or in the employ of the Mafia. These are they who stand behind the ballot-box and dictate the returns of the election. It is the villains of this stamp who crowd themselves in the rear of a public auctioneer and fix alike the price of the article sold and the name of the buyer. The people well know that they are being terrorized, yet so entire is the perversion of morals, so great the dread of the power of the society, and so abhorrent to the Sicilian mind is an appeal to the courts, that they tamely submit.

Within a comparatively few years two of these organizations have been exposed and condemned, but as yet it is not clear that they have been exterminated. The first, known as the "Mulini," was ostensibly an association of millers, which pretended to have for its object the facilitation of the collection of the grist tax. As a matter of fact, the "true inwardness" of the society was the establishment of a monopoly in flour, in order that the price of that commodity might be forced up to an artificially high point. The organization proved eminently successful, and the people of Palermo, who, in times past, had risen in clamorous sedition because of the high price of bread, withdrew their support from the authorities only for attempting to break up what was virtually an association for the oppression of the poor. These circumstances emphasized the fact before set forth, that the people of Sicily regarded nothing so disgraceful as an appeal to the

courts for protection. The second of these societies was that of the "Posa," closely connected with the former. Its avowed object was the promotion of mutual assistance among workmen employed in mills and among the carters engaged in carrying the corn. Its real purpose was far different. It found no difficulty in levying a tax upon master-millers and corn. From the imposition brokers had derived a steady, well-assured income. Its sinews of war thus strengthened, it found itself able to undertake, with great ardor, its task of regulating all sorts and descriptions of business, whether political, commercial, or social. Did a proprietor desire an attendant for an orange or an olive grove, the Posa dictated who should be the beneficiary of the proposed position. Was a vineyard to be leased upon the slope of the mountains overlooking the "Golden Shell," not until the consent of this order had been obtained did the owner dare to enter into arrangements for its cultivation. Indeed, this society even assumed the rôle of peacemakers, composing difficulties in families and procuring pensions for indigent scions and poor relatives of rich houses. Should the demand of the order not be complied with, the services of the hired assassin were at once brought into requisition. This fact was so well known that the mere preferment of a request known to have come from the organization was almost as effectual as was the "dead line" at Andersonville; an almost impregnable wall.

From what has been said some idea may be gleaned of the nature and objects of an organization which is known and dreaded in every community of which the swarthy children of sunny Italy form any considerable percentage. The commission of open crime is rarely necessary. The power of intrigue inherent in the association itself is so well known and so thoroughly dreaded that a simple behest, well authenticated, is usually sufficient to terrorize the timid. The recalcitrant well know that persistence in the refusal to obey such a command means the shedding of blood by the unswerving hand of an unscrupulous assassin.

The Italian government has been assailed because of its seeming indifference to the condition of affairs in Sicily. It

has also been accused of doing little or nothing in the way of the amelioration of the condition of the inhabitants of the island. It should be remembered, however, that behind and underlying the administration of all law must be the moral force which emanates from the people among whom the law is enforced. As has been said, courts of justice in Sicily find themselves hampered by the public sentiment which exists in nearly if not quite every quarter of the island. Only in rare cases will a Sicilian give information which may lead to the capture of a delinquent. To denounce a criminal to public justice is regarded in very much the same light as would have been, in the eighteenth century, the offer of a challenge to the police. It is with the utmost difficulty that juries can be induced to convict, and a verdict of acquittal is made all the more easy through the absence of witnesses, who can very seldom be induced to testify. Should ever an inoffensive wayfarer be assassinated, the moment the judicial investigation of the crime is begun the weapons, once reeking with the blood of the victim, are either buried or hidden, and eye-witnesses standing near the scene of the perpetration of the crime, have been known to lose at once the sense of sight and hearing, while their memory is usually hopelessly at fault. The government finds itself compelled to pursue them in detail, and its efforts at their apprehension usually prove futile. It is hopeless to attempt to stamp out crime in this manner. For centuries Sicily has been the theatre of nearly every description of crimes of violence, and at least a century of education must pass before public sentiment can be so far aroused and quickened into action as to render the commission of this description of criminality impossible to the people.

The recollection of the shooting of certain Italian murderers by a mob in the Parish prison at New Orleans in 1891 is too fresh in the public mind to call for especial narration. The affair, as will be remembered, came near involving the United States in more or less serious complications with Italy, from which our government was happily extricated through the astute diplomacy of James G. Blaine, then secretary of state. It was asserted by the people of New Orleans, and

generally believed throughout the country, that the prisoners who were killed in the Parish prison were members of the notorious order of the Mafia, and that the crime with which they were charged had been committed under instructions from the chiefs of that organization in the metropolis of Louisiana, and in pursuance of a settled and well-defined policy of assassination.

In this connection it is interesting to quote from Mr. St. John Brenon, an Irish writer of some note, who accompanied Gen. Philip Sheridan during the latter's visit to Italy in 1881, during which trip he acted as the general's interpreter. After General Sheridan's return to the United States, Mr. Brenon remained in Italy for several years, devoting considerable time to the study of the nature and workings of the secret criminal societies of the Italian peninsula. He is of the opinion that the government has succeeded in giving to these organizations their death-blow, even if they have not been virtually broken up. Mr. Brenon says:

"In lynching the Mafia ruffians the New Orleans people took the only course open to them if they wished to rid the city of this murderous gang. Italy treated them in even a worse manner. I saw them shot down on the streets of Sicily like mad dogs; dozens of them at a time. Their gang was absolutely exiled from Italy, and took refuge in America. I have heard from an official in Italy, who is in a position to know, that the Mafia gang is quite as powerful in New York as it is in New Orleans. Under Bourbon rule this criminal society originally flourished in Sicily. It was partially suppressed, or at all events its baneful influences weakened, in Palermo in 1860, when Garibaldi took the administration of the city, but it reassumed such dangerous proportions in the island in 1866, that the Italian government sought by every means possible to root it out of the country. In this endeavor it was baffled for years, but finally, by adopting the severest repressive measures, to which the New Orleans episode is nothing, it managed to make it impossible for the Mafia to remain any longer on the island. They migrated in large numbers to New Orleans and New York. This was not

accomplished without heroic public effort. The Mafia had powerful political pressure at its command, which made them secure for years.

"I must give you an idea of what the Mafia really is. Many nobles of the wealthiest families of Sicily were members of it—some from sympathy, others from fear. It differed from the Camora society in the fact that it has been always leagued with brigandage. For that reason its existence was to defy the law and to despise the judiciary of the country. The Mafia controlled elections, boycotted when it was in a merciful mood, but as a rule it robbed and assisted indiscriminately the purposes of plunder and revenge. It has a code of honor called Omerta, which means the code of men who have blood in their veins by which all who are members of the Mafia bind themselves never to give evidence in a court of law and never to seek at law redress for any injury.

"In alliance with the Mafia is a sub-secret order called Fratellanzo, who are a band of assassins, whose motto is: 'Sweet is the wine, but sweeter still is the blood of the Christian!' Their acknowledged god is Aremi, which is the name of the playing-cards of the Sicilians, marked with gold money. It therefore signifies gold. Doubtless it is this subdivision of the Mafia that is the pest of New Orleans. I am satisfied, from personal letters, that the Italian government and Italian people, save those who outwardly are influenced by party feeling, admit that the citizens of New Orleans did right in punishing in a summary way those wretches. They, in a measure, imitated the methods adopted by General Pallavinci when he successfully put down brigandage in Calabria by shooting wholesale, not only the Mafia brigands, but those who gave them shelter. In 1866 the Messina Camora was scotched by killing without trial and lynching at one coup twenty-nine of the worst members of this society. Against this kind of justice the Italians made no complaint, but on the contrary expressed thanks to the government for ridding the island of a class that terrified law-abiding citizens."

CHAPTER XV

THE ASSASSINS

The Orient has given to the world no end of legends and tales, many of which the novelists and dramatists of the Occident still utilize as plots and motives about which to build entrancing romances and moving plays. Fabulous in plot and rich in imagery as was the ancient literature of Arabia, it was not a great exaggeration of some pages taken from the authentic history of the Mohammedan nations. Remove the Genii from the Arabian Nights, and quite as wonderful stories can be found in the annals of the Assassins.

Originally a most austere and ascetic faith, Islam gradually grew to be the personification of all that was self-indulgent and gross, and finally became the haven for all debased and corrupted souls who desired to give full rein to their licentious passions and, at the same time, securely cloak their immoral lives under the form of strict religious observances. To this policy must be ascribed the remarkable, unparalleled rise of the new faith, whose propaganda was the sword, and whose final reward was an eternity of licentious bliss. But, while this course rendered Islam great, conquered empires and spread its faith in all directions, it ultimately led to its decline and fall. Thus the primal strength of the Mohammedans proved their ultimate weakness. Had the followers of Islam practiced the severe morals and methods of Christianity, there is no reason to doubt but what they would have conquered the world and established a universal, though perhaps brief, empire. Students of history will remember how Hannibal, when he had brought his victorious Carthaginians almost to the gates of Rome, foolishly went into winter quarters at Capua, one of the most luxurious and vicious of all

the voluptuous cities of Southern Italy. Here the army of the invader fell victims to the enervating effects of three months of riotous dissipation, and, in consequence, were unable to contend with the more abstemious soldiers of Rome. The fall of the Roman Empire itself must largely be assigned to the same cause.

The story of the fall of Moslem power in Northern Africa, Western Asia and Southern Europe presents points of decided similarity to the failure of Hannibal and the decline of Rome. While success stimulates, it not infrequently intoxicates. This was the case with the Moslems. Their victories were so numerous and uniform that they came to regard themselves as invincible, and believed that their manifest destiny was the subjugation of all the "infidel" nations. In the meantime, indulgence in vices had weakened them, physically, mentally and morally, and they were soon unable to cope with their opponents, who were fighting for country and religion. Thus began the disintegration of the nucleus of what might well have become a vast and powerful empire. One of the strongest elements in breaking down the power of Islam and scattering to the four winds of heaven the fruits of its past victories, was found in the order known as Ismaelites, a secret society having its headquarters at Cairo, whose members claimed descent from Ismael, the last of the seven so-called Imaums, and who declared that they alone were entitled to the Califate. This organization gave an allegorical interpretation to the precepts of Islam, which led, as their adversaries asserted, to considering all positive religions equally right, and all actions morally indifferent. The growth and development of the atrocious order of the Assassins, to which the present chapter is devoted, seems a perfectly natural and legitimate sequence of such teachings.

The real origin of the Ismaelites, who were destined to have a mighty effect in the downfall of Islam, and from which sprang the semi-military organization known as the Assassins, is at once of interest and value. This sect existed for some time unnoticed, and it did not become prominent until the ninth century, and owed its prominence at that time to Abdal-

lah Ibu Maimun, whose father had been put to death for professing materialistic doctrines, and trying to turn the people away from Islam. Abdallah adopted his father's doctrines, but used greater caution in propagating them. His object seems to have been to undermine and abrogate all Islam and substitute for it materialism, atheism and immorality.

Abdallah appears to have early perceived that it was the height of folly to attempt the overthrow of any prevailing religion which was supported by the armies of the reigning dynasty, and that there was scarcely more hope of overturning the dynasty which was upheld by the precepts and influence of a priesthood that was supposed by the people to have been divinely appointed. He perceived that in order to accomplish his purpose it would be necessary, in the first place, to sunder the relation existing between the church and state, between monarchy on the one hand, and priestcraft on the other. A man without courage might have been appalled by the extent of such a conception, but the very difficulties in his path would seem to have served as a stimulus alike to Abdallah's ambition and his energy. He saw that in order to bring about results at which he aimed, it would be indispensable to organize a society bound together by oaths of inviolable secrecy. Accordingly, he devised a scheme for the formation of such an association, in which there would be seven degrees of initiation, and which he surrounded with mysterious rites. Little by little, the neophyte was instructed in the doctrines which Abdallah was about to promulgate, and gradually he learned the aims of the order with which he had connected himself. In the highest degree he was taught the vanity of all religion and the utter uselessness of attempting the practice of any form of virtue. The ideas of the founder of this strange sect were industriously propagated during his lifetime by missionaries known as Dais, who traveled through Western Asia and Northern Africa, disseminating these doctrines.

One of the most prominent of all the Ismaelites was Hassan-ben-Sabbeh-el-Hamairi. Hassan was of Persian descent, and at Nishpur, about the middle of the eleventh century, had studied under the celebrated Mowasek. Thor-

oughly imbued with the free-thinking tendencies of Persia, he had obtained from Ismaelite Dais, or religious leaders and instructors, an insight into their secret doctrines, and a partial consecration to the rank of Dai. Not, however, until after the accession to power of the caliph Melenshah did he emerge from obscurity. It was not long after his formal appearance at the court of this prince before he acquired great influence. Unfortunately for the prosecution of his plans, however, a report reached the caliph's ears that Hassan had said that if he had at his bidding two devoted friends he would soon overturn the power of the Sultan and the grand vizier. These words were construed as indicating that Hassan cherished treasonable projects, and was contemplating the overthrow of the reigning dynasty. Fearful of falling under the displeasure of Melenshah, he repaired to the court of the Caliph Mostaussur, who received him with distinguished honor and loaded him with marks of favor. It was not long before he became involved in trouble with the commander of the Castle Damietta and was thrown into prison. Immediately upon his release, this arch-conspirator went to Syria, in which country, during several years of his sojourn, he made many converts. Traveling over the country, he finally arrived, with some of his followers, at the Castle Alamut (Vulture's Nest) in the Persian district of Rudbar, about the year 1090. This fortress had always been regarded as impregnable, but partly through stratagem and partly by force, it fell into the hands of Hassan and soon became both the base of his future operations and the seat of his power. Its fortifications were at once strengthened, and it became in fact, as it had been considered before, absolutely impregnable.

Secure in his fortress, Hassan began the work of organizing what he had for years contemplated, a rival society to the Ismaelites, which he proposed to propagate by means of systematic murder. This order was known as the Ismanilians, or Hassanis, frequently spoken of as the "Eastern Ismaelites," and was designed to become a terror to his powerful neighbors. Hassan-ben-Sabbeh soon assumed the title of Sidua, which signifies "our lord," although he was frequently desig-

nated as "The Old Man," or "Supreme Master of the Mountain," because his followers always ensconced themselves in castles in the mountainous regions. As regards his authority, it cannot be said to have been that of either king or prince, but was rather in the nature of the rule exercised by a sheik. For nearly three centuries this powerful, unscrupulous and finely organized military society proved the terror of neighboring Oriental monarchies. Not only did it assail the temporal power of States, but with equal avidity strove to undermine and destroy all religions. Its fundamental principle seems to have been that neither in this world nor the next would virtue be rewarded or wrong-doing punished. Their pretensions to temporal power by divine right were based on the claim that Ali and his posterity were the only rightful succession to the prophet Mohammed.

The internal constitution of the society, which has some resemblance to the orders of Christian knighthood, was as follows: First, as supreme and absolute ruler, came the Sheikh-al-jebal, the Prince, or Old Man of the Mountain. His vicegerents in Jebal, Kuhistan, and Syria were the three Dai-al-Kebir, or grand-priors of the order. Next came the Dais and Refiks, which last were not, however, initiated like the former, into every stage of secret doctrines, and had no authority as teachers. To the uninitiated belonged, first of all the Fedavies or Fedais—i. e., the devoted; a band of resolute youths, the ever-ready and blindly obedient executioners of the Old Man of the Mountain. The Lasiks, or novices, formed the sixth division of the order, and the laborers and mechanics the seventh. Upon these, the most rigid observance of the Koran was enjoined; while the initiated, on the contrary, looked upon all positive religion as null.

Wicked and depraved as he undoubtedly was, Hassan was a man of marked ability, and possessed distinguished powers as an organizer. In addition to providing a model for the society, he prepared a code for the instruction of the Dais, or missionaries. This may be termed rules of conduct, and embraced seven fundamental points. The first of these points referred to was "knowledge of the calling," and purported to

ASSASSINS DYING AT THE COMMAND OF THEIR CHIEF.—PAGE 264.

reveal the essential nature of human character and of the impulses governing its actions. The second treated of the best methods of "gaining confidence," and instructed the missionaries how best to win converts by flattering their vanity and promising them unbridled indulgence of their passions. The third presented a system of "Dialectics," a method of argument through the use of which the Dais might involve disputants in doubts concerning the positive precepts of the Mohammedan faith, and point out the absurdities of the Koran. Then came the "Ahd," or "Oath," by which the emissary bound himself to inviolable silence and absolute submission. He obligated himself never to impart any doubt as to the propriety of his vocation to any one but his superior, whom alone he was blindly to obey. The fifth point sought to establish the claim that the doctrines of the order would accord with the beliefs cherished by the greatest minds of all the ages. The sixth was a mere recapitulation of the preceding five in order that the uninitiated might be confirmed and strengthened in his profession. In the seventh point absolute atheism was impressed upon the mind of the Dais by the means of an allegory in which faith and duty were represented as the mere fanaticism of a disordered mind.

An order based upon the lines we have outlined, and fortified by such ingenious instructions, could not fail to attract decided attention, and soon various princes began secretly to pay tribute to the Old Man of the Mountain. After a time the new order and the successes it was attaining, attracted the attention of the Sultan. Although informed of the real nature of the Western Ismaelites and the tendency of their teachings, the Sultan seems to have treated the matter with supreme contempt. He did not rest long in that frame of mind, but speedily came to realize that the welfare, possibly the very integrity of his empire, was seriously threatened.

Although it is probable that systematic murder was the real cornerstone upon which Hassan from the first planned to erect a mighty and most corrupt superstructure, he did not, in the outset, make this manifest, but, like the skilful politician that he was, kept the strongest point of his entire system

entirely in the background. In the meantime, the system of instruction that he had introduced had prepared his followers for the diabolical work that was at hand. At length he judged that the propitious hour had arrived, and started in motion the skilfully constructed murderous machine that was to rid him of his enemies, by means of poison and the dagger, and bring the surrounding princes into a state of subjection. At this time there was probably no limit to the ambition of the Old Man of the Mountain, who probably expected to ascend the throne of the Sultan and make himself—such is the confidence born of ambition for power and greed for gold—the supreme ruler of the world.

While murder had doubtless been long secretly practiced under the direction of Hassan, the first instance that has come down to us was the assassination of Nisamolulk, vizier of the Seljukides. His death appears to have been an understood signal for the perpetration of murders in a wholesale way. At once there began a long series of assassinations, many people of great prominence being stricken down. This was not tamely submitted to, but met with vigorous retaliation and a long and sanguinary strife ensued, in which, thanks to their splendid organization and their unscrupulous methods, the Assassins, as they may hereafter be called, usually secured the larger share of victims. Hassan-ben-Sabbeh and his adherents now openly threatened the throne itself, the leader issuing a proclamation in which the prominent adherents of the Sultan were condemned to death. Those of the highest rank afforded the brightest and most shining marks, and were the first to fall. The order and the government were now at open war, and, between the assassin and the executioner, death reaped a rich harvest.

History abounds with horrible incidents of this most unnatural and inhuman warfare, where the principles of humanity were thrown to the winds and supplanted by the basest of methods. A few illustrations, better than any detailed description, will show the horrors of what, for lack of a better term, may be termed a civil war. On a prominent feast day, as a prince of Mossul was walking in the court of

the Grand Mosque, he was stabbed and instantly killed. His murderer, who must have known he had no chance for escape, was seized and immediately beheaded. Riswau, Prince of Aleppo, a rich and powerful dignitary of the north of Syria, had protected the Assassins, and more than once made use of their swords, daggers and skilfully compounded poisons, for the removal of his enemies and the extension of his power. His sudden death, although probably the result of natural causes, was charged upon the order, and was used as a pretext for a most violent assault upon it. Riswau's son, who succeeded him, and who appears to have greatly opposed Hassan and his dark schemes, promulgated an order for the instant death of the Old Man of the Mountain and all his followers.

Although the order fell far short of fulfillment, and Hassan was not harmed, a terrible revenge was taken, which was consummated after a fashion then peculiar to the East. The formalities of the law were ignored, and not less than three hundred men, women and children were cast into prison alive, there to suffer all the horror of a lingering death through starvation. One of the leaders met with a fate peculiarly horrible. After being hewed to pieces at one of the gates of the city, his limbs were torn off and his head was carried about through Syria as a frightful warning to his associates. Some of the Assassins were hurled from the top of the walls into the moat, while many saved themselves by flight, and others, in order to avert the suspicion of being connected with the order, denounced their friends, and even murdered them. For this slaughter the order took ample revenge, killing their victims singly, however, instead of adopting the methods of Riswau.

The Assassins did not fail to invade Persia, where they satiated their bloodthirsty propensities by putting to death some of the most illustrious of the court. Among Hassan's lieutenants in this country were the Dais Kia-busurg-omid and Abu Ali. Hassan remained supreme commander of the organization for thirty-five years, dying in 1124, at the age of seventy. Perceiving his death to be approaching, he sent for Kia-busurg-omid and Abu Ali and divided the government of

the order between them. To Abu Ali he gave the power of civil administration, including the right to direct its external operations. To Kia-busurg-omid he imparted supreme power over the spiritual affairs of the organization.

Although, like all "soldiers of fortune," skilled in the use of the sword, the Assassins do not seem to have affected it to any great extent, but preferred the dagger and poison, in the preparation and use of which they were highly skilled. Where the death of high dignitaries was desired, poison was almost always resorted to. In projects of this kind, men highly trained in the art of flattery and deception were employed; these were masters of the second great point in the code of Hassan-ben-Sabbeh. In the use of the poniard these despicable wretches were veritable adepts, a small slender knife being in their well-trained hands as effective as a broadsword wielded by a burly executioner. The names of the distinguished men of various monarchies who fell victims to these treacherous methods during the Grand-Mastership of Kia-busurg-omid would fill many pages. Immunity from the treacherous arts of these miscreants was absolutely unknown, since one could hardly be sure that his closest servant, or even his friend, might not be a member of the dreaded and accursed society. Sometimes they gained entrance to the presence of their intended victim in the guise of dervishes, sometimes they pretended to be servants, and frequently worked themselves into positions of confidence and trust in the establishment of the men they designed to murder.

When the Crusaders, during the lifetime of Hassan, returned to Europe after an effort to reclaim the whole of Palestine, they spread, far and wide, the report of the existence of a dominion within and yet outside of the State, which, they maintained, was likely to menace, if it did not overthrow, Europe. So great was the fear of Philip Augustus of France that for years that timid monarch did not dare move about his kingdom, unless attended by a strong bodyguard.

Heckethorn, an English investigator and author of considerable repute, spent much time in the East in the collection of facts and traditions calculated to throw light upon the

methods of this most remarkable organization. The following paragraph is taken from him:

"The first two divisions of the Ismaelites were known as the self-sacrificers. It was their boast that they despised fatigue, danger and even torture, joyfully offering their lives whenever it pleased the Grand Master to require them, either to protect himself or to execute his mandates of death. No sooner was a victim indicated to them than they immediately set out to encompass his death, without regard to either distance or the fatigues of the journey. It was their habit to clothe themselves in a white tunic girdled with a red sash—the colors of innocence and blood."

Whatever is said of the Assassins, and no story of cruelty or treachery that can be invented would greatly transcend the truth, their faith to their Supreme Commander stands out as a remarkable instance of fidelity and devotion. As an instance of this quality, rare enough even among enlightened and virtuous men, the case of one Conrad Montferrat may be cited. He had quarreled with the Grand Master of the order, or had excited the jealousy of some Christian prince, who desired his removal. Upon the order of the Grand Master, two members of the association presented themselves as candidates for Christian baptism; and while seemingly intent upon the devotions incident to the reception of the sacrament, were actually waiting for an opportunity to assassinate their victim. At a favorable moment the design was executed, and both men fled, one taking refuge in a church. Having learned, however, that their victim had been removed, still living, the latter villain once more forced his way into Montferrat's presence and stabbed him for the second time, the result being fatal. He was at once arrested, tried and subjected to the very refinement of torture, yet died without any manifestations of either remorse or physical suffering.

It is not easy to conceive the motive for such devotion. To the Christian mind, the sufferings of the saints and martyrs are sanctified by their faith in the truths of a religion whose precepts the Christian world believes to have been as pure as they are divine. Why should an assassin willingly sacrifice at

once his liberty and his life in the commission of a crime actuated by impulses combined of the elements of both personal devotion and of absolute atheism? Is it not possible that here is a revelation alike of the strength and the weakness of human nature? The moral character of man is an anomaly. The records of the criminal courts show that men have been ever ready to commit crimes of a detestable character, and yet after the perpetration thereof have stooped to ask a kiss from a child.

Essentially a social creature, men must have associates and frequently pine and die when separated from their kind. As already pointed out in this volume, thieves and murderers are disposed to associate together and hunt their prey in pairs or bands. It seems highly probable that something of the feeling of fidelity to friends which actuates all good men is retained by those who have fallen to the lowest depths of crime, and is manifested, in a strange and perverted way, toward their accomplices. The long experience of the author in unraveling criminal mysteries and bringing guilty parties to punishment has convinced him that this is true. He has known burglars and murderers, against whom a perfectly clear case of guilt was established, refuse to disclose or even give a hint, as to the identity of their accomplices, when such a disclosure would either have secured them immunity or considerably lessened the measure of their punishment. The old saw about "honor among thieves" undoubtedly has a substantial foundation in fact, although the word "honor" is not used in the higher sense of the term, and the instances are rare.

Doubtless this feeling, assiduously cultivated as it was by the teachings of "the code," had much to do with the strange fidelity of the Assassins, yet this is far from furnishing a reasonable explanation of many remarkable instances. The people of the East are essentially religious, or, more properly, fanatical, and, as in the case of the Stranglers of India, doubtless carried much of this perverted sentiment into the dark calling to which they dedicated their lives. The very origin of the term "Assassin" suggests another, or rather an additional, explanation. Some philologists derive the word from

the name of the founder of the order, Hassan-ben-Sabbeh, but the better authority is that the word comes from the word "hashish," an intoxicating drug prepared from the Indian hemp-plant. The people of the East have been addicted to the use of this powerful drug from the earliest times. It is said that Hassan used systematically to employ it in stimulating his emissaries—"screwing their courage to the sticking-place"—when an act of special daring was required.

While this policy of Hassan is well established and is doubtless true, some of the stories of the methods he employed to secure the absolute submission, not to say devotion, of his followers must be taken with considerable allowance, and are strongly suggestive of the romance that pervades the Orient. At the same time, it is highly probable that they contain much of truth; indeed, many early writers maintained that the folowing story is almost literally true:

It is related that in one of the provinces of Persia, where the famous valley of Mulebad was situated, there was a park lying almost in the heart of the mountain, so difficult either of egress or ingress that it was entirely possible for one to be carried thither in an unconscious state without knowing how he approached or how he might leave, what appeared to him to be an enchanted region. Oriental legends say that here was situated the famous palace of Aladdin, with which the readers of the Arabian Nights are familiar. Surrounded by perpendicular cliffs, there was but one avenue of approach to its turf, and even this was difficult of discovery by one hemmed in by the abruptly rising precipices. According to the Persian legend, this delightful spot abounded in luxurious vegetation, and was visited by maidens of rare beauty, for whose accommodation pavilions had been scattered about. It seems to be a striking commentary upon the prevalence of Oriental superstition that, inherently improbable as it appears, the followers of Hassan professed absolute belief in the existence of this miraculous valley. It is said, that to induce devotion on the part of his adherents, the "Old Man of the Mountain" first made his agents drunk on hashish, and while in this condition, caused them to be carried into the valley, where each was left

to roam whithersoever he pleased. Gradually his senses became more and more intoxicated until all notions of moral consciousness had been lost in the delirious whirl of sensual gratification. After recovering sufficiently to appreciate his delightful surroundings and to understand the charms of the sylphs who had engaged his attention, he was in a mental condition to believe that he had been transported to Elysium. Before he had become sated with pleasure he was again made drunk and transported to his own home. When his services were required, he was told that he had once been allowed to enter Paradise, and that if he failed to do the bidding of his superior he would never again be permitted to enjoy the same delights.

Whatever the power that held the Assassins in subjection and obedience, and it was doubtless of a complex nature, there is no doubt but what the Old Man of the Mountain and his successors exercised it most unsparingly. History is full of incidents attesting this. About the time of the First Crusade, one Henry, Count of Champaign, was traveling in the East, presumably on business connected with rescuing the Holy Sepulchre. As he was passing in the neighborhood of one of Hassan's strongholds, the Grand Master of the Assassins invited him to inspect his fortress. While Hassan and the count were making the round of the place, the former made a cabalistic sign, well understood by those in attendance; whereupon two of the "Faithful" instantly stabbed themselves, falling dead at the feet of the astounded visitor. "Say but a word," remarked Hassan, without displaying the slightest emotion, "and at a sign from me you shall see them all die at your feet."

Before the Sultan had learned of the perfect organization, absolute devotion, and hence great strength of the Assassins, he sent an ambassador to demand the immediate and unconditional surrender of the rebels. No sooner had the mandatory message been delivered than Hassan said to one of his followers, "Kill thyself." This command was instantly, and seemingly willingly, obeyed. Turning to another he said, as calmly as if ordering a cup of coffee, "Throw thyself from the

tower;" and the body of the faithful servant was instantly flying downward toward the rocks two hundred feet below. With an affable smile, and without the slightest manifestation either of excitement or anger, Hassan said to the astonished and horrified ambassador: "Seventy thousand followers obey me with like alacrity. Take this answer to thy master."

Although the Assassins never succeeded in establishing an empire, for the greater part of two centuries they menaced the peace of the East and committed crimes innumerable. Their decline was due to the same general causes that have overthrown kingdoms in all ages; effeminacy and a weakening of established rules. With Hassan-ben-Sabbeh died the great genius of the order, although among his successors were men of marked ability and cruel hearts. Kia-busurg-omid, the immediate successor of Hassan, died in 1138, and was followed by his son Mohammed, who developed ability as a leader and a warrior—on the detestable lines adopted by his order. In 1163 Hassan II. was foolish and rash enough to extend the secret privilege of the initiated—exemption from the positive precepts of religion—to the entire body of his people. At the same time, he undertook to abolish Islam in his own dominions, which led to his falling a victim to the dagger of his brother-in-law. Hassan II. was succeeded by his son, Mohammed II., who adopted, essentially, the spirit of his father. Under the rather weak rule adopted by him, the Syrian Dai-el-Kebir, Sinan became independent, and entered into negotiations with Baldwin, the Christian king of Jerusalem, for coming over with his followers, upon certain conditions, to the Christian faith. But, apparently that they might not lose the yearly tribute exacted from Sinan, the Templars rejected his overtures and killed his envoys. Mohammed II. gave a practical illustration of the methods of his murderous order, falling a victim to poison administered by his own son, who succeeded him as Hassan III. This parricide reinstated Islamism, and in so doing obtained the surname of the New Islam. Mohammed III., a boy of nine years, was the successor of the last-named ruler. His rule was so effeminate as to lead to the eventual overthrow of the order. He was mur-

dered by the command of his son, Rokn-eddin, who became the seventh and last Old Man of the Mountain.

In 1256 the Assassins of Persia ceased to exist as an organization. In that year, the Mongolian prince, Hulagu, burst with his vast hordes upon the hundred or more hill-forts of Persia, held by the Assassins, and succeeded in capturing and destroying them all. About the end of the thirteenth century, the Syrian branch of the society was also put down, but remnants of the sect continued for some time, to linger in Kuhistan. After a lapse of a century—to be exact, in 1352—the Assassins reappeared in Syria, but never again rose to prominence. It is said that they still exist, as an heretical sect, both there and in Persia. The Persian Ismaelites have an imaun, or superintendent, in the district of Keem, and still live, under the name of Hosseinis, in the neighborhood of Alamont. The Syrian branch of the order inhabit the district of Massiat, Massyad. In 1809 their castle was taken from them by the Nossarius, but was afterwards restored. These remnants of the Assassins have ceased the diabolical practices of bygone centuries, at least so far as is openly known.

While the outline here given of the performance of this most remarkable organization is drawn from the most authentic historical sources, it must be understood that these are, for the most part, hostile to the Assassins; consisting as they do, of the Christian chroniclers of the Middle Ages and the subsidized historians of the orthodox Mohammedans. At the same time, it is not probable that the story is greatly exaggerated. Eight hundred years ago the western world was almost bodily given over to force, brutality and deception, and Europe showed many instances of cruelty and wrong that might well take rank with the worst acts of the Assassins. So great has been the moral progress of civilized man since the dark days portrayed in this chapter, that we are almost unable to appreciate the moral depravity that then swayed the hearts and shaped the actions of those who yearned for power and gold.

There is one passion of the human heart that must have had much to do with the rise and remarkable prosperity of the

order of Assassins, to which attention has not yet been directed; the innate impulse to take human life. Had the servants and followers of Hassan-ben-Sabbeh been endowed with that horror of murder which now almost universally prevails, at least in the western world, such a society as the Assassins would have been impossible, inconceivable. But with men in whom the homicidal impulse had been given free rein, nay, encouraged by present rewards and the promise of immortal bliss, the case was far different. In some respects the Assassins resemble the Stranglers of India, who succeeded them in order of time. In each the love of killing was developed to the highest conceivable point, and made, in a certain sense, a part and parcel of the religion, or superstition, they professed to follow.

Who can read this brief chronicle of the Assassins, and catch a glimpse of the dark background presented by the world of that time—the Christian, as well as the Mohammedan and Pagan world—and not believe that mankind has advanced, in morals as well as intelligence and civilization, since those awful days when the life of a man was counted as less valuable than that of the horse he rode? The author does not contend that moral improvement is progressing rapidly at the present day; he knows that it is advancing slowly, but he trusts, and confidently believes, that it is moving in the right direction. A single generation shows small changes, but the lapse of eight centuries demonstrates the truth of the proposition that the world is becoming better.

CHAPTER XVI

THE THUGS OF INDIA

From the earliest ages the Oriental countries have abounded in crimes of a revolting character. That this is due to the decay of an early civilization has been questioned, but it seems probable that such is the truth. While the wants and pleasures of a pastoral people are few and easily satisfied, their tendency to debauchery and crime is likewise limited. Our civilization began in the East, and upon the East first dawned the blighting fire that, in the past history of the world, has always accompanied intellectual enlightenment. India, if not the actual birthplace, at least the training-school of the race, early fell into that degeneracy that is now threatening the western nations. The religion of a people has much, everything in fact, to do with its intellectual and moral advancement.

While the Christian faith is intensely democratic, in that it provides one course of life and one means of salvation for all classes of men, rich and poor, lord and peasant, that of India is essentially two-fold. There is one creed for the educated and influential, another for the ignorant and lowly. The former is not wanting in elements of true and exalted philosophy, the precepts of which have produced many men of high character, whose lives and teachings have adorned and elevated humanity.

In remote ages no discrimination seems to have existed, and all were taught the principles of right living. For many centuries, however, this has been a thing of the past. The ancient philosophy is still maintained and nurtured, it is true, but it exists only for the higher classes, while the common people have long been plunged into absolute degradation. In

lieu of the austerities practiced almost universally in the olden time, and yet observed in the monastic institutions, where the ancient philosophy still exists in something of its original purity, the creed of the common people is fairly well expressed by the word "license." Under the outward form of religious worship is embodied the secret gratification of almost every evil passion. Thus, with the masses of the people of India, religion becomes a grotesque parody upon all that is truly good and virtuous. European savants visit India, converse with its priests, study its ancient sacred books and return with glowing accounts of the exalted philosophy still taught there. Such men seemingly ignore the distinction we have pointed out, and forget to mention the depths of superstition into which the masses of the people have fallen, and from which the ancient faith, still remembered and taught in the inner temples, has not the living force to extricate them.

Left practically to themselves, the common people, without forgetting the name and essential attributes of God, have fallen into a most debasing polytheism, and have made a god for almost every visible object and passion, whether noble or debased. Deities are not confined to the elevating and ennobling, but the thief, the drunkard, the voluptuary—the murderer, even—have each some particular deity, to whom he acknowledges special obedience, and to whom he looks, and that with entire confidence, for the granting of particular and special favors. The names of the deities of India are literally legion. No European has ever compiled a list of them, and such a labor would far transcend the abilities of any one man.

In all the long catalogue of Indian gods and goddesses, perhaps the most debasing and revolting is Kalee, the goddess of destruction. Every description, almost, of rapine, whether directed against person or property, is under her special protection and patronage. Her worshipers are numerous, and their devotion seems well-nigh unlimited. In her "sacred" name the vilest deeds are committed, and the darkest crimes exalted into the highest religious duties. So far-reaching is this devotion to Kalee, that murder, even when committed for the purpose of gain, is regarded as a sacred act, and is sur-

rounded by a halo of glory peculiarly its own. Kalee is the special deity and patroness of the order of "Thugs," who claim her as peculiarly their own, and in her name commit the most enormous and revolting crimes.

This diabolical, yet most mysterious society, which fastened itself upon Hindostan to a much greater extent than is generally appreciated, possesses a most absorbing interest and is not wanting in some of the elements of genuine romance. The origin of Kalee is obscured in a vast mass of mythology which renders a comprehensive notion of her original attributes difficult to obtain. Among its most ancient legends is one to the effect that in the beginning of her reign the bloodthirsty goddess devoted her personal attention to the disposition of the bodies of those slain in her honor. Her commands were enshrouded in the most profound secrecy, and no Thug was ever permitted to even cast a backward glance upon the scene of his crime. It was taught, and actually believed, that the society prospered only so long as the behests of the murderous goddess were implicitly obeyed. But, long ago, so long that the exact date is lost in the mist of years, there came a time—so runs the legend implicitly believed by thousands—when some perverse and misguided Thug had the extreme hardihood to wilfully disobey one of the precepts of this rather tyrannical goddess. Kalee seems to have risen to the emergency and struck her devotees a body blow. She promptly withdrew from them her personal assistance, and, while still demanding victims, no longer disposed of their remains, enjoining upon her followers the duty of burying their own dead.

It may be thought that this horrible belief is but a mask behind which the perpetrators of hideous crimes hide their real personal wickedness. To a certain extent this is no doubt true, for mankind always seeks an excuse for its misdeeds, yet the Thugs undoubtedly have a certain faith in their self-imposed superstition and are thereby led to greater acts of crime than they would otherwise dare to commit.

There is nothing more revolting in the whole history of crime, from the most remote times, than is found in the story

of this abominable sect. To the Thug, the implement of murder is the emblem of his religion. In the days of their glory, every form of assassination was regarded as a most holy act, and, according to the traditional precepts of Kalee, its commission was the "open sesame" that threw back the gates of paradise to either the murderer or robber. There is, in the entire history of the world, no instance of a greater perversion of religion than is here manifested; it demonstrates how depraved hearts may turn sacred things to the basest uses. Organized bands of thieves and murderers have existed in all ages and countries, but to India alone is reserved the unenviable distinction of having lifted murder and theft into the domain of religion, and surrounded them with so-called sacred ceremonies and worship. To the minds of those reared in Christian lands, the opinions and motives of the worshipers of Kalee are almost incomprehensible.

The word Thug is derived from the Hindustani word "thoga," to deceive; hence, literally, a deceiver, a cheat. The name Thug is the one by which all grades of this very numerous society are known throughout the civilized world, but in Hindostan they are distinguished by various appellations, which are employed in different portions of the country. In the northern part of the peninsula they are known as "Thugs," while in the south they are generally designated as "Phansigars," or "Stranglers," from Phansi, a noose. In the south of India the Stranglers formerly operated under the patronage of the native chieftains, who shared in the profits of their protégés' thefts and murders. In that section these organized murderers usually masked their real occupation under some apparent employment, generally the cultivation of the soil.

Both the native and the English governments have taken active steps to suppress thuggee—the practices of the Thugs—but it is only since 1831 that any really energetic efforts have been made on the part of the British authorities to stamp out this fearful curse. At present it has well-nigh disappeared, though it still exists in some rather remote provinces of India. It has, however, left a deep impression upon Indian society

and practices, and murder by strangulation is still remarkably prevalent there. The operations of the remnants of the Thugs still continue to baffle the British detectives, and many mysterious crimes go unpunished through the practice of methods that have come down from times when thuggee prevailed in all its original, fiendish perfection. In the inquiries instituted by the English government, a good deal of light has been thrown upon the methods of these murdering villains, during the first half of the present century.

A British officer—Captain Sleeman by name—is authority for the statement that the Thugs were accustomed to sometimes operate in gangs of two or three hundred; that they traveled in a body, although moving through the country in small parties of ten or twenty, the several bands within easy reach of each other. The roads selected for their journey were usually those running parallel, and their respective routes were so laid out that they might all concentrate immediately, should occasion arise. They usually presented the appearance of ordinary and inoffensive travelers, and not infrequently pretended to be itinerant merchants. When circumstances placed them in a position where their comparative wealth would justify them in making a display of the same, they assumed the guise of prosperous citizens traveling for pleasure.

Before their practices were interfered with by the agents of the law, the Thugs operated in a most systematic and orderly manner, having a good organization and being exceedingly well disciplined. With as consummate skill as was ever manifested by the best trained European organizations for plunder, the Thugs used to haunt the outskirts of small towns and villages where the authorities would be powerless to combat with them in the event of a disturbance. In little parties, apparently disconnected, they would straggle into a town and meet at some prearranged rendezvous. Each party, and each member of it, had a special duty to perform, usually the discovery of the names, wealth and intended movements of those about to go upon journeys.

These bands were comprised of women as well as men;

whole families, including small children, belonging to them. If ever children were born with a heritage of crime and shame, these children of the Thugs surely were. It is only by understanding this point that we can appreciate how men, formed in the image of God, and endowed with the rudiments, at least, of conscience, could sink to the depths of superstition, cruelty and vice occupied by the Thugs. As an infant, born and reared in a Christian home, comes to love true religion and the practice of self-denial, generosity and virtue, so the infant Thug was, from the very beginning of his conscious existence, taught to love the most detestable things; to regard theft as the most commendable occupation and to look forward to the commission of his first murder, as the youth of the days of chivalry eagerly anticipated the first joist or battle that might give him a pair of spurs and the honorable name of knight. This education has about it something so horrible that its equal can hardly be found, in any wholesale way, in the entire annals of mankind. The schools of our day are not more carefully graded than were those in which the art of deception, duplicity, theft and murder were systematically taught. In comparison with the academy operated by Fagin, from which thieves were graduated and licensed to ply their trade, those of the Thugs occupied the position of a post-graduate course in one of the highest of our modern universities. From babyhood the children of these wretches were associated with every phase of crime, and taught to emulate the most wicked and inhuman deeds. Having passed through a long novitiate, in which deception and the art of assuming a look and bearing of innocence were the chief lessons, the aspirant to the position of a full-fledged Thug was finally put to work. This was at first confined to menial duties and the perpetration of minor crimes. Such assistants were invaluable to the real operators of the band, as they could more readily gather information than adults, and at the same time divert suspicion from the real purposes of the band.

The inhabitants of the East have always been noted for their plausible speech and insinuating manners, but among them all none have excelled the Thugs in these regards.

Polite and affable to all with whom they came in contact, they were especially attentive and obsequious to those whom they had marked for robbery and murder. Although they were possessed of no end of resources, their method of procedure, where murder was to be committed, was usually substantially the same. The first step was for the leaders of any particular party to ingratiate themselves into the confidence of the unfortunate traveler, from whom they cunningly elicited information as to the place of his residence, his point of destination, the purpose for which his journey had been undertaken, and what property, if any, he carried with him. Sometimes the assassins would propose to travel with their intended victim, saying that mutual protection against Thugs rendered such a step desirable for all alike. Often some other specious pretext was given as an excuse. More frequently, however, they followed him at a little distance, until a favorable opportunity presented itself for a murderous attack.

The work of the assassin is, in itself, proof of a lack of personal courage; a murderer stabs a man in the back because he is a physical coward, and fears to meet him face to face. To this rule the Thugs formed no exception. Not only would they wait for days to take a proposed victim at a disadvantage, but they never encountered him single-handed. At least two Thugs were always detailed to make an attack upon a single man, and where a party was to be assailed the assassins always presented themselves in sufficient numbers to render resistance unavailing. The Thug who, alone and unsupported, could drag an unsuspecting rider from his saddle and take his life, was, in the estimation of his fellows, covered with glory, and the occurrence was handed down by his posterity as a mark of high honor.

The usual method of practicing thuggee was as follows: The selected victim was, without previous warning, suddenly surrounded by an ample force of Thugs who had, perhaps, followed him for days, awaiting this opportunity, one of whom threw a rope or cloth across his neck, one end being retained, while the other was seized by a confederate. The two ends were then crossed and drawn taut, and death from strangu-

lation usually resulted speedily. Simple and effective as this method would seem to be, the extreme prudence of the Thug often deterred him from adopting it. A third confederate was often at hand, whose business it was to seize the struggling man, throw him to the ground, supplement the action of the deadly cord with a series of brutal kicks and blows which speedily deprived the wretched victim of life.

Sometimes another method was adopted. One Thug would station himself in front of the unsuspecting traveler, another would follow behind, while a third would walk by the side of the rider and engage him in conversation. At an opportune moment the assassin beside the stirrup would drag the victim from his saddle while the one in front turned and seized him. Before he could rise or exert whatever strength he possessed, the third murderer would pass a rope round his neck and the work would be speedily accomplished. Whichever method was adopted, the Thugs always proceeded with the greatest possible caution, and often had a reserve force ambushed within easy call to guard against the possibility of a surprise by other parties.

In lieu of a rope or cord, as the instrument of strangulation, a ribbon or sash was often employed. Many Thugs seem to have preferred this implement of death, for the reason that they could be openly worn about the person without exciting suspicion. As to the exact method of using this seemingly harmless, but none the less fearful, weapon, a few lines from the report of a commission appointed by the English government will prove of interest:

"When a waist cloth or sash is used, it is previously doubled to the length of two feet, or two feet and a half; a knot is formed at the doubled extremity, and a slip-knot tied about eighteen inches from it. In regulating the distance of the two knots, so that the intervening space, when the scarf is tightly twisted, may be adapted to embrace the neck, the Thug who prepares the instrument ties it upon his own knee. The two knots give a firm hold of the cloth, and prevent its slipping through the hands in the act of applying it. After the person attacked has been brought to the ground, the slip-

knot is loosed by the Thug who has hold of that part of the cloth; and he makes another fold of it around the neck; and placing his foot upon it he draws the cloth tight, in a manner similar to that—to use the expression of a Thug informer—'of packing a bundle of straw'."

In thuggee the disposition of the body was as important a matter as the act of murder, and was attended to with equal care and method, substantially uniform in all cases. White is the emblem of mourning in India, and their first act, after making sure of the booty, was to cover the body with a white cloth, carried with them for that purpose. Two of the band were usually left in attendance. These raised their voices in a mournful chant for the dead, as was the custom of the country. The East Indians grade sorrow by the amount of noise produced over the remains of the departed, and the two mourning Thugs always howled in a manner that at once disarmed all suspicion. When any one approached and began inquiries about the deceased, the grief of the Thugs became so great as to render explanation impossible. If forced to speak, they were not wanting in reasons and excuses. The deceased had been a member of a party of travelers with whom they had been associated, and, of course, they were remaining as a religious guard over the remains of the unfortunate man. How had he been killed? Really, they did not know. The fact that he was dead was enough to arouse their grief, and the manifestations of their sorrow were loud enough to awake the echoes on all of the surrounding valleys. In order to conform with the East Indian custom and still further to disarm suspicion, one of the watching Thugs would, from time to time, fall down upon the ground and writhe as if in pain induced by the recollection of the virtues of the late departed. Not infrequently such a band of thieves appealed to the charity of a traveler by pretending that they did not have sufficient money among the whole party to pay for the burial of one of their number. When this ruse could be successfully worked, of course the receipts of the gang of assassins were enriched by just so much.

The Thugs always selected a sequestered place for their

murders, and usually a location convenient to a running stream. The reason for this last peculiarity has never been satisfactorily explained, for the rule of burial observed by them required that the body of a victim be interred in the ground and covered to a depth of at least two feet, though their graves were usually dug to a depth of from three to four feet. Bodies were invariably buried face downward. The impulse to take human life, cultivated in these wretches from their childhood, was frequently not satisfied with simple murder. They were accustomed to mutilate the bodies of their victims in a most outrageous and fiendish manner. Long and deep gashes were often cut in various portions of the body, which was then distorted into grotesque and abnormal shapes. This was, no doubt, a quasi-religious ceremony, and a particular Thug was selected for the horrid duty. This office was regarded as decidedly honorable. But burial was not absolutely indispensable. Where, for fear of discovery or other causes, it was not safe or convenient, the body of the victim was placed in a sack, carried away from the scene of the tragedy and thrown into a well. The district of Oude is irrigated by water drawn from wells, and, in the palmy days of the Thugs, the finding of a dead body in a well excited little interest and led to no inquiry, so frequent were these gruesome discoveries. In districts where there were few wells, such as Behar and Bengal, the rivers were, in cases of necessity, utilized as places for the convenient disposition of bodies. Sometimes the place of interment was concealed from the view of passers-by by erecting a tent over the place, so long as the band desired to remain in the neighborhood.

Although very methodical in their homicides, the Thugs never allowed a victim who had evaded stangulation to escape with his life. When such an exigency arose, the traveler was at once set upon by other members of the band, ensconced in some convenient ambush for that very contingency. A large number of wounds were inflicted upon him, and his head speedily severed from his body. Instances are exceedingly rare where a victim, marked for death, has ever escaped to recount his terrible adventures. When such an instance

occurred, or when, from other reasons, they were apprehensive of arrest, the band would disperse and disappear from view as if swallowed up by the ground, only to reassemble at some prearranged rendezvous, remote from the scene of the trouble.

Diabolical as were the practices of these monsters, they were far from considering their murderous calling as at all dishonorable, but actually regarded it as a mark of the highest distinction. Although living entirely without the pale of the law and the usages of the people, they were not without some recognized rules of life. Marriage, as solemnized according to the different religious faiths of India, was practically unknown to them. As already stated, the children born to the Thugs were raised in the worship of Kalee, and trained to become active members of the band. The Thugs belonged to one of the numerous castes of India, and, so far as possible, restricted their numbers to that caste only. Sometimes they replenished their ranks from outside sources, but in this the greatest caution was observed, and no such member was admitted who had not attained his majority. Each gang had its Jemadar, or leader; its Gru, or teacher; its Sothas, or entrappers; its Bhuttotes, or stranglers, and its Lughaees, or grave-diggers.

Among the devotees of thuggee, rank and something like aristocracy existed, and these were based upon ideas not essentially different from those prevailing among Europeans. They recognized an aristocracy of birth. After this was ranked services that had been rendered to the order, the number of murders committed being the basis for calculating merit. Capacity was also of great weight, and was always established by some definite and positive proof. A noted Thug was asked by one of the Royal Commission how he had managed to attain the rank and dignity of Jemadar, or leader. He explained that any Thug could accomplish that who possessed reasonable ability and the means to provide for the sustenance of a band for two or three months. He said further that men remarkable for physical strength sometimes attained the distinction on that account, and that it was fre-

quently conferred upon those who could show descent from a line of Thugs. It thus appears that the same three elements that have made rulers in all ages and among all nations, were recognized by these organized assassins: hereditary succession, wealth and native ability. To acquire the title of Subahdar, or captain, an office superior to that of Jemadar, and which was not always filled, greater merit and distinction were required. To reach this eminence, one must possess all three of the qualifications, viz., wealth, genius and high descent. Thus something of politics was not unknown to the sanguinary Thugs.

The Thugs had a dialect distinctly their own and likewise a system of cabalistic signs, well understood by all members of the infamous order, and absolutely unknown to all others. A few of these secret methods were discovered by a British commission.

Caution was suggested by drawing the back of the hand outward from the throat along the chin. When any cause for alarm existed, the open hand was passed over the mouth and drawn slowly downward. Should one party of Thugs desire the assistance of another, for instance, in the burial of the dead, the wish was indicated by certain marks made in the dust of the road. Any direction taken along the highway was indicated by drawing the naked feet through the dirt. Should assistance be desired quickly, the dust was piled up at the end of a line made by foot-marks, or by a hole dug in the road with the heel. Should the roads be in such a condition that there was no dust available, stones were brought into requisition, and the same signs indicated by their use.

There seems to have been no well-settled rule for the division of their ill-gotten plunder. According to one account, a portion of it was usually appropriated to defraying the expenses of religious ceremonies; and sometimes a part was also allotted for the benefit of widows and families of deceased members of the gang. The residue of the booty, being divided into several parts, was generally shared as follows: To the leader, two shares; to the men actually concerned in perpetrating the murder, and to the person who mutilated the

dead body, each one share and a half; and to the remainder of the gang, each one share.

Both as a religious, or, more properly, superstitious creed, and as a means of acquiring wealth, thuggee was practiced upon the water as well as upon the land. Although the methods employed were necessarily different in many regards, the controlling principle of action was the same in both instances; duplicity and fraud were always the law and the gospel of the Thug. The most plausible and the most cruel and treacherous of mankind—this is the epitome of the Thugs, and this characterized them, wherever found.

In a subsequent volume, the author proposes to present something like a history of piracy, of the dark and cruel deeds and reckless daring of buccaneers of all ages and nations. Pirates are the marine "soldiers of fortune." They rob and kill, but they do it under an ensign that proclaims their dark character to all upon the high seas. More than that, they engage in open fight, and risk their own lives in the hope of taking others and securing coveted plunder. The Thugs who operated upon the rivers of India were pirates, in that they killed and robbed, but in no other regard. To designate them by that name would be to cast a slur upon Kydd and Morgan. This may seem an exaggeration, but we must remember that there are gradations in crime as well as in virtue, and that some human monsters have lived who have not only disgraced mankind, but appear to have out-deviled the devil.

At one time the principal rivers of India fairly swarmed with thieves and assassins. Like land Thugs, they usually operated in large parties, to the end that surprises might be avoided and no possible chance be given the victims they had marked for slaughter. These parties were divided, after the manner of an army, into small bands, each charged with the performance of a special task. It will be seen that this "business" was quite complicated and involved the investment of considerable capital. As a first requirement, a large number of boats, properly equipped and manned with a sufficient number of Thugs, was indispensable. One division of the party were allotted comparatively innocent tasks. These

were dressed in the conventional garb of boatmen who performed the ordinary duties of men of their class. Another detachment consisted of apparent patrons of the boat and passed as respectable travelers. The boats operated by the Thugs came in free competition with those of honest boatmen. They were kept scrupulously clean, and in no regard suffered by comparison with those of others. The well-dressed false patrons of the boats were either traveling on important business, or, more frequently, either on a pilgrimage to some sacred shrine, or returning from the performance of such a religious duty.

The Sothas constituted one of the most important divisions of the band. To them was intrusted the task of finding out wealthy travelers and inducing them to travel by water, if they had decided to make a journey on land, and, as a matter of course, to take passage in some particular boat. These men were the real "fine-workers" of the enterprise, and could have given most valuable points to the "confidence men" who infest our modern cities. Having somehow struck up a casual acquaintance with the selected victim, they adroitly learned in what direction he was traveling, his business, the amount of money or valuables he had with him, and all the information that might prove of value. This done, they suggested that they were going to the same place and usually succeeded in inducing their companion to accompany them; in which event he was taken to the wharf where, seemingly by pure coincidence, a fine boat was about to start, either up or down the river, as the Sothas, or entrappers, indicated by their cabalistic signs.

It may appear strange that these wretches could succeed in deluding men of intelligence and experience, at a time when mysterious disappearances of travelers were extremely common. It must be remembered that the Thugs were a most secret society of whose operations little was actually known and whose very existence was doubted, and even scoffed at, by many. It is safe to say that we know vastly more of thuggee than did well-informed people of India a century ago. The discovery of a dead body in a well or the disappearance of

a wealthy traveler was set down usually to the score of murder, it is true, but not to the operation of an organized band. Besides, the entrappers were exceedingly subtle and adroit. Trained from childhood in the art of deception, which they regarded as one of the highest functions of religion, these men had no end of expedients, and could readily adapt themselves to any conditions that might arise, and were thus more than a match for those they were likely to encounter.

When a Sotha and his victim presented themselves at the boat, they were invariably told that passage could not be secured. We generally yearn after the unattainable and will struggle for that which is withheld, and in doing so lose sight of its real nature. Under the entreaties of the Sotha, to which were frequently added those of his dupe, the captain of the boat would reluctantly yield, the passengers would come on board, and the voyage begin. No sooner had the boat reached a position secure from observation than the well-dressed travelers came forward, and began singing and playing upon various musical instruments and raising a terrible din, under cover of which the uususpecting traveler, or travelers—for often several victims had been secured—were strangled, their rifled bodies being thrown into the river, where they were free to sink or swim, so far as the assassins cared; for floating dead bodies attracted little curiosity or sympathy, and, viewed through the fatalistic eyes of the Hindoo, had met the fate provided by him from the beginning. This "business" dispatched and the booty either divided or given to the proper agent to dispose of, the boat would make for another village, where fresh victims might well be in waiting to take a passage for their last earthly voyage.

Taken for all in all, the Thugs were the most successful and by far the best organized of all the thieves and murderers that have ever banded together for purposes of crime. Over all other efforts at banded villainy, thuggee possessed this one decided advantage; superstition was so adroitly blended with cupidity as to render the two practically inseparable. The love of money is one of the strongest passions that controls and very frequently debases human nature, and,

when skilfully mingled with religious fanaticism, or something that stands for it, and takes its place, produces a compound that succeeds where either alone would fail, besides reducing to an absolute minimum the chances of detection, by sealing the mouths of all concerned in the revolting trade.

The exact origin of this religio-murder society is lost in antiquity, its secrets having been usually well kept. Comparatively recent investigations have, however, thrown a good deal of light upon the subject, and the professed theories of the organization are now fairly well understood. The Thugs always claimed that the promptings of religion, not the passion of avarice, were the causes of their peculiar and murderous practices. That all Thugs were sincere in this profession is, of course, absurd, yet it seems clear that the great body of them actually believed that murder was an exercise of religion. We here find the homicidal impulse elevated to a foremost place among the motives and passions that influence and control mankind. From childhood it was developed and educated, mingled with the proper proportion of cupidity and solidified into the cornerstone of a most malignant superstition. In a preceding chapter it was pointed out that the impulse to take life is constantly subdued among Christian people, in consequence of which, most of them are not conscious that such a disposition lurks somewhere within their hearts. We now see what results from a reverse of this method; how the encouragement and development of the homicidal impulse makes men professional murderers, who not only gloat over their dark deeds, but justify and exalt them as necessary parts of what they regard as genuine religion.

In a certain sense, the faith and practices of thuggee are similar to that practiced by Raoul Croc, alias Gottlieb Rinhalter, whose rather remarkable efforts to carry into practical operation the theories and suggestions of Malthus, are recounted in a preceding chapter. Kalee, the patron goddess of the Thugs, and the wife of the god Siva, was the deity of destruction, as Croc was its apostle. In the name of this goddess the Thugs exercised their profession, and to her they ascribe its origin. Although, as already remarked, Kalee long

ago ceased to aid her votaries in disposing of their victims, she did not, according to the belief of the Thugs, refuse them assistance. The legend, believed by all orthodox Thugs, is that Kalee at one time determined to rid the world of its abominations, and proposed to do this through the process of murder. Her typical gifts to her votaries were one of her teeth, to be used as a pickaxe for digging graves; a rib, for a knife, and a portion of one of her undergarments from which to make a noose to be used as an instrument of strangulation. This legend explains the extreme veneration of the Thugs for the pickaxe. The manufacture of this instrument was superintended with the greatest care. When completed it was not ready for use in digging the graves of people whose lives had been sacrificed to the goddess, until it had been consecrated to her service by appropriate ceremonies. One part of these exercises consisted in breaking a cocoanut with the instrument, after which the entire band prostrated themselves and offered up what passed with them as a religious worship.

The keeper of the Great Seal of England is not selected with more care than was employed in securing a proper custodian for the consecrated pickaxe of a band of Thugs. The person chosen was thus honored because he was supposed to possess certain traits of character, among them being shrewdness, courage and sobriety. While on a journey, the sacred tool remained in his exclusive custody, but when the band went into camp it was always deposited in the earth, where it was supposed to remain under the special protection of the goddess. The point was invariably turned toward the direction in which the party proposed to proceed; these wretches cherishing absolute confidence that should Kalee consider another course preferable, the point would be found, when the utensil was dug up, to have veered about so as to indicate the divine will. It is said that sometimes Thugs, while halting for rest, were accustomed to throw the axe into a well; and a received superstition was that when wanted it would arise of itself, if summoned in proper form.

There was no more sacred spot on earth than that wherein the consecrated pickaxe was buried. The ground covering it

must not be stepped upon, and an unclean animal must on no account be permitted to approach it. After having been used in digging a grave it was thoroughly purified by washing on each occasion. Should the sacred implement fall from the hand of the man to whose care it was intrusted, dismay and consternation seized the entire band. Such an accident was regarded as an omen of some terrible evil about to befall either the individual himself, or the whole company. It might indicate the death of the man whose sacrilegious carelessness had permitted such an occurrence, or it might be an indication that some dire reverse was to overtake the fortunes of the assassins. The unlucky custodian was at once deprived of his high office, and the pickaxe was invariably consecrated anew. An oath taken upon it was considered the most solemn obligation known to these murderers, if, indeed, it were not the only one which could be said really to bind their conscience, if conscience they had. In fact, so great was the veneration of the Thugs for this instrument, divinely appointed to be used in their villainous pursuits, that in comparison it might almost be said that the sacred water of the Ganges was impure to the Hindoos and the Koran a blasphemous book to the Mohammedans.

During the course of the investigation set on foot by the English government into the particulars and practices of the Thugs a witness said, in answer to a question put to him by a British officer touching the pickaxe: "Did we not worship it every seventh day? Is it not our standard? Is its sound ever heard when digging graves by any one but a Thug? Can any man ever swear to a falsehood upon it?" Another Thug, speaking upon the same subject during the progress of the same investigation, said: "How can we dig graves with any other instrument? This is the one appointed by Kalee and consecrated, and we should never have survived an attempt to use any other. No man but a Thug who has been a Strangler, and is remarkable for his cleanliness and decorum, is permitted to carry it."

As already indicated, the Thugs paid a great deal of attention to the education of their children, who from birth were

consecrated to the worship and service of Kalee. The women, though taking no active part in murder, were fully as depraved as their male associates, a mother's greatest ambition being that her child might rise to a high position in the order. Deceit being the foundation of all their practices, they began by imposing it upon their children, who were not at once initiated into the awful crimes perpetrated by their elders. They were kept ignorant as to murder for some years. In the meantime their cupidity was excited and developed by giving them portions of the spoils taken from victims. The source of the supplies was not made known to the infants, who, however, gradually began to understand the real business of the band. In this way, theft and murder, so far from being revolting, became decidedly attractive to the youthful Thugs; indeed, crime came to be a part of their very nature. Associated as they were with mysterious rites and superstitions, these children may be said to have literally inherited the passion for murder.

A system so diametrically opposed to that taught by Christians and absorbed by the little ones at their mother's knees, can hardly be conceived of as recently existing in full force, and still remaining in some parts of India; yet the authority for the statements we have made is unquestioned.

The position of Bhuttote, or strangler, one of the most important in the entire organization, was not easy of attainment, and an applicant must have been a novitiate for some time, before he could aspire to the high honor. If any repugnance to murder had survived the teaching of his childhood it must, first of all, be absolutely overcome. This accomplished, he applied to the Guru, or teacher, of the band. This word seems to be derived from "gur," a kind of coarse sugar used in initiatory ceremonies by which the teacher was consecrated. The Guru, satisfied that the applicant was a fit subject for advancement, at once proceeded to instruct him in the science of strangulation. This meant a long course of preparatory study and practice. His first duties were those of a scout, then he was advanced to the position of grave-digger and then a holder of limbs.

The applicant being previously prepared for the high dignity, a victim was selected for his first effort. Care was exercised to obtain one easy to dispatch, by reason of age or weakness; furthermore, the time was so arranged that he could be attacked immediately after being aroused from a sound sleep, and was, in consequence, somewhat bewildered.

Before proceeding to the commission of the assassination, the goddess was invoked to give an auspicious sign, and should it be concluded that this supplication had met with a favorable response, the murderers, in almost satanic glee, repaired to the place where the selected victim, all unconscious of danger, was soon to meet a horrible and unlooked-for death. The Guru, facing toward the west, next tied a knot in one corner of a handkerchief, in which he enclosed a rupee. This knot was always of a peculiar description, and the privilege of tying it was confined to those who had been regularly initiated into the order of Stranglers; in fact, the ability to tie such a knot was regarded as an indubitable mark of regular initiation, and the handkerchief so knotted may be almost spoken of as the ribbon of the order to which its possessor belonged.

This accomplished, the sleeping victim was aroused by the novice, who was expected to be absolutely pitiless and remorseless in accomplishing his fiendish design. In this regard probably no apprentice ever disgraced his Guru, for in his depraved estimation the act was one that introduced him into full membership in the most honorable society on earth. The act completed, the new Bhuttote paid homage to his father in crime, and likewise to the members of his family. After the first murder, Kalee was again invoked that she might indicate by some well understood sign or incident that the graduate in crime had found favor in her eyes. This seen and recognized, the elated assassin hastened to untie the knot tied in the handkerchief by the Guru and remove the rupee he had placed there. This coin, together with any other money the now full-fledged assassin possessed, was at once presented to the Guru, who, after reserving one rupee for gur to be used in a subsequent religious ceremony, expended the remainder

for sweetmeats, upon which the parties proceeded to regale themselves.

Certain classes and castes were exempt from all danger of death or robbery at the hands of the Thugs. Many bands never took the life of a woman. A Behar Thug, being interrogated by a member of the Royal English Commission as to the practice of his gang in this respect, answered with much warmth: "Strangle women? Never! We would not murder a woman if she had a lac of rupees about her." A member of the Doad association being present during the examination, promptly added: "Nor would the Doad Thugs if she had two lacs upon her." Of the class which enjoyed the seeming indemnity were oil-venders, musicians, carpenters, blacksmiths, dancing-masters, washwomen, poets and Ganges water-carriers. The exemption of the latter class was particularly due to the reverence in which Thugs held the water of the sacred river, inasmuch as carriers were not exempt if their pots were empty. Fakirs were also favored in the same way, as were also the maimed and lepers.

A strange illustration of the superstition governing the worshipers of Kalee is shown by their respect for the sacred cow, although in this particular they were disposed to be scrupulous in the observance of technicalities. Thus, if the sacred cow was found with the person who had been devoted to death, much art was sometimes employed in separating the victim and the animal. It is related that a party of fourteen persons, who had been designated for death, had in their possession a sacred cow. To have assassinated the proposed victim while in company with the cow would have been an act of sacrilege which even a Thug would not have attempted. Therefore, it became necessary to detach the cow from the party, after which the project might be carried to completion, the life of the men being considered of vastly less consequence than that of the cow. Accordingly, the holy animal was bought, the purchasers pretending that they had vowed to present such an offering at one of the temples in Singapore; and, as a matter of fact, so great was the superstition of these villains, they did actually present the animal at the shrine

named before entering upon the commission of the crime. The obstacle having been thus removed, all of the unsuspecting travelers were strangled by the assassins within three hours from the performance of this act of religious worship, and the purchase money paid for the cow recovered with the booty.

While the superstitions of the Thugs are all of Hindoo origin, they have largely been adopted by the Mohammedans, who, without abating one jot of their devotion to the Koran, still pay divine honors to the Hindoo goddess of destruction. To explain away the seeming inconsistency of this course, they often set up the claim that Kalee is really identified with Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed, and wife of Ali. They say that Fatima invented the use of the noose to strangle the great demon, Rukutbeijdana. Among the Mohammedans, the order of Thugs never existed, but something of the same kind may be found in the "Assassins," treated of in the preceding chapter.

Although this most diabolical society had practically been broken up in India, its influence is still felt in that vast country, where assassinations are alarmingly frequent and human life is held at a very low price. Long years were required to develop thuggee to its full power, and, probably, a corresponding time must elapse before the homicidal impulse is subdued among the descendants of those who so skilfully and cruelly threw and tightened the fatal noose made from the hem of Kalee's garment.

CHAPTER XVII

SECRET POISONERS

Poisoning, as a means of taking human life, has been practiced from the earliest ages. The Greek and Roman writers mention several well authenticated instances, and numerous others resting upon somewhat doubtful evidence. It was not until the seventeenth century, however, that this most atrocious practice became of frequent occurrence. From this time it rapidly increased, and spread over the whole of Western Europe like a veritable epidemic. In fact, it came in time to be elevated into a regular branch of education among nearly all who professed or aspired to a knowledge of chemistry, magic or astrology. Many of these persons rose to a somewhat doubtful distinction through their ability to prepare poisons so slow and insidious in their action as to defy the best medical skill of the time to detect. So great was the demand for these as a means of "removing" enemies, but more particularly friends, who stood in the way of a fortune or a title, that these vile concocters and distillers of poisons capable of producing death so like the ordinary decay of nature as to arouse no suspicion, amassed vast sums of money from their sales, and in some instances are said to have sold, at immense figures, the secret of preparing their drugs.

While the preparation of poisons was most practiced in France and Italy, where the processes came to be looked upon as an art, it was by no means confined to those countries, but spread all over Europe. Shakespeare represents the King of Denmark, the father of Prince Hamlet, as being assassinated by a subtle and powerful poison poured into his ears, and in his great play of Macbeth describes a witch's kitchen where poison was in the process of manufacture from the most

detestable materials. In England, during the reign of Henry VIII., an act was passed ordering the employment of secret poisoning an act of high treason. Of prominent instances of poisoning in English history, may be mentioned the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, by Viscount Rochester and his wife. It was currently believed that James I., who died March 27, 1625, was poisoned by Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. So strong was this conviction among the people that one Dr. Lamb, a quack and conjurer, who was believed to have supplied Buckingham with the poison, was seized by the angry populace in Cheapside, London, and beaten and stoned to death.

It is recorded that shortly after the beginning of the Christian era—A. D. 26—Agrippina, afterwards Empress of Rome, refused to taste fruit offered her by her husband's father, the Emperor Tiberius, while she was sitting at his table. This briefly, but aptly, illustrates the extent to which this diabolical "art" was carried, even in that remote age. At this time flourished the infamous Locusta, known as a most skilful compounder of poisons, who is said to have supplied Agrippina with material for taking the lives of those who stood in the path of her inordinate and wicked ambitions. For infamy this woman will compare with the most detestable of her sex. On her second widowhood, she induced the Emperor Claudius, her own uncle, to marry her, and espoused his daughter to her son Nero, himself one of the most depraved of mankind. In order to bring Nero to the throne she ruined many noble families, and finally poisoned her husband, Claudius.

Britannicus, the step-brother of Nero, and rightful heir to the throne, had been excluded through the intriguing of Agrippina, and, after a time, Nero decided to put him to death, Locusta, it is said, supplying the necessary poison for the purpose. The habit of drinking hot water, much affected in our own times as a remedial agent, was very common in the times of the Romans. Britannicus was poisoned at a royal banquet. A slave brought water to him, as was the custom, but he refused to drink it, declaring that it was too hot. This seems to have been prearranged, for in the cold water that

Britannicus himself ordered to cool the draught, was contained the poison of Locusta. No sooner had he partaken of the hot water thus cooled than he lost his voice and the power of respiration. Sitting at an adjoining table were Nero, the emperor, together with Agrippina, his mother, and Octavia, his wife. The two women expressed emotions of horror and fright; Nero alone, the originator of the crime, looked on, his cold, glassy eyes unmoved and his brutal heart untouched. After a few moments of agony, Britannicus, a youth of fourteen, said to be of an amiable character, and possessed of attractive manners, expired. His body was removed and the feast went on. The remains of the murdered boy were buried with pomp, the secret of his death being known to none but the emperor and the slave whom he had either commanded or hired to bring about the fatal catastrophe.

In this connection it is worth while to state that post-mortem examinations were, early in the history of the church, regarded almost in the light of sacrilege. Not until the fifteenth century did the Pope authorize the dissection and examination of the bodies of the dead, and even then anatomy and pathology were in their infancy. The first great anatomist, Vessalius, did not flourish until one hundred years later.

The life of the infamous Agrippina terminated in a manner well befitting her evil career; she was put to death by her son, Nero, in the year 60. Nero is said to have himself experimented in the preparation of poisons, and to have tried their effects upon slaves and felons, much after the manner that scientific men of the present day test any recent discovery or experiment on a cat or dog.

The composition and mode of preparing some of the most famous, or rather infamous, of the "slow poisons," are tolerably well understood, but their publication, in a work like the present volume, could conserve no good end and might lead to much harm, since an evil desire in the heart of some people becomes overpowering the moment a method of carrying into effect in a manner calculated to avoid suspicion, is suggested.

Among the ancient Greeks and Romans, the preparation and use of poisons for taking human life were well under-

stood. The former frequently executed condemned persons by forcing them to take poison. The instance of the great philosopher, Socrates, who was compelled to drink a decoction of the poisonous hemlock, and who died from its effects, will be remembered by all. The suicide of the famous Greek orator, Demosthenes, and of the Carthaginian general, Hannibal, by means of poison, will also be recalled.

The name "Borgia" has come to be regarded as almost synonymous with the word poisoner. While many of the members of the infamous family certainly deserve all the odium that can be heaped upon them, and may well be classed among the most debased and cruel of mankind, it does not appear that their practices differed essentially from those of many of their neighbors, except that they entered into the business in a more wholesale way. The Borgias were originally Spanish, but rose to great prominence in Italy after Alfonso Borgia was made Pope, as Calixtus III., in 1455. Roderigo Borgia ascended the papal throne, having corruptly and unblushingly purchased his election thereto, in August, 1492, under the religious name of Alexander VI., and proved a disgrace to the Church. One of the first acts of this Pope was the elevation to the rank of Archbishop of his son, Cesare Borgia, one of several children born to him by a famous Roman woman named Vanozza. This Cesare was one of the most infamous wretches that ever lived. He seems to have given himself entirely up to debauchery, while his cruel disposition and strong impulse to take life, made him a "professional assassin." It is recorded of him that, accompanied by young men as depraved and reckless as himself—if such a thing were possible—he used to traverse the streets of Rome at night, killing citizens for the one purpose of gratifying his lust for blood. He caused his brother, Giovanna, who had been advanced by his father, the Pope, to be assassinated. Cesare was an accomplished poisoner, though his wicked heart usually led him to employ the poniard or the sword. He was of powerful build, and one of the handsomest men in Rome.

The wicked Roderigo Borgia, Pope Alexander VI., was, like Shakespeare's engineer, "hoist with his own petard"—in

other words, he fell a victim to poison that he had caused to be prepared to bring about the death of others. In 1503, in the seventy-third year of his life, and the eleventh of his pontificate, he planned, in conjunction with his son Cesare, the death of a large number of cardinals. His exact motives can hardly be pointed out at this day, though it is probable that the intended victims had demurred at the wholesale course of crime adopted by the Pope and his son. Alexander had bidden a large number of guests to attend a sumptuous banquet at which wine, as was the universal custom in those days, furnished a large portion of the entertainment. Certain decanters of wine had been carefully poisoned, probably by Cesare, and a wholesale murder was impending. It happened, however, whether through carelessness on the part of the Borgias, or design on that of the servants, that the infamous father and son partook of the wine in the poisoned decanters. By a singular anomaly in one so utterly depraved as Cesare Borgia, he was little addicted to the use of wine, always drinking it with greatest moderation. This habit, peculiar in any Italian of that day, was the means of saving his life. He suffered from the effect of the poisonous draught, but speedily recovered. The Pope, on the contrary, was much addicted to the use of wine, often drinking to great excess, and before he began to suffer from the effects of the poison, had imbibed so freely that it was found impossible to save his worse than useless life.

The career of this man and his son shows the depths to which men endowed with every high faculty incident to human nature, yet lacking purity and kindness of heart, may descend. With the possible exceptions of Nero, Caligula and Commodus, no more depraved wretch than Alexander VI. ever sat upon a throne. Not only did he disgrace the Church, but cast a dark blot upon the very name of humanity.

Lucretia Borgia, sister of Cesare, was a woman of remarkable beauty, and foul as she was fair. She led a wicked and licentious life, and is said to have been one of the greatest poisoners of the "age of poison" in which she flourished. She was three times married, her second husband, Alfonso, Duke

of Biscaglia, being assassinated by her brother Cesare in 1501. To detail the life of this wicked woman would be but to multiply hideous instances of crime. Like her brother, Cesare, she liberally patronized learning and the arts, for which reason, she did not lack able defenders, who glossed over many of her wicked acts.

To show how poisoning was regarded in that age, a case instanced in the Memoirs of Henry II., fifth Duke of Guise, may be mentioned, of a certain soldier who was requested to rid him of Gennaro Annese, one of his chief opponents in Naples. The means proposed to the soldier was the poniard, from which he shrank with every indication of genuine horror; at the same time, he calmly announced that he was entirely willing to poison Annese.

About the middle of the seventeenth century poisoning became so frequent and was increasing at such an alarming rate, that, despite the secrecy imposed upon the confessional by the rules of the Catholic Church, the clergy felt it their duty to acquaint the Pope, Alexander VII., with the fearful extent of the practice. On investigation it was found that young widows were extraordinarily abundant in Rome, and that most of the unhappy marriages were speedily dissolved by the sickness and death of the husband; and further inquiries resulted in the discovery of a secret society of young matrons, which met at the house of an old hag, by name Hieronyma La Spara, a reputed witch and fortune-teller, who supplied those of them who wished to resent the infidelities of their husbands, with a slow poison, clear, tasteless and limpid, and of strength sufficient to destroy life in the course of a day, week, month, or number of months, as the purchaser preferred. The ladies of Rome had been long acquainted with the "wonderful elixir" compounded by La Spara, but they kept the secret so well, and made such effectual use of their knowledge, that it was only after several years, during which a large number of unsuspecting victims had perished, and even then through a cunning artifice of the police, that the whole proceedings were brought to light. La Spara and thirteen of her companions were hanged, a large number of culprits were whipped half

naked through the streets of Rome, and some ladies of the highest rank suffered fines and banishment.

Early in the eighteenth century a similar organization was discovered in Naples. This was headed by a woman of seventy years, named Toffania. This depraved old hag manufactured and sold a poison said to be similar to that produced by La Spara and very probably made after the same formula. She sold this murderous compound very extensively in Naples, numbering many of the nobility among her customers, under the name of "Acquetta." She also bestowed upon it the name of "Manna of St. Nicola of Bari," which was the name by which the so-called miraculous oil of St. Nicola, very popular in that day, was known. Thus disguised, she sent it throughout Italy, and was the means of putting hundreds of people to death. This poison, now best known as the "Acqua Tofana," or "Acqua di Perugia," is said by Hahnemann to have been compounded of arsenical neutral salts; while Garelli states that it was crystallized arsenic dissolved in a large quantity of water; but both agree that it produced its effect almost imperceptibly, by gradually weakening the appetite and respiratory organs. After having directly or indirectly caused the death of more than six hundred persons, Toffania was at length seized, tried and strangled in 1719. From this time the mania for secret poisoning gradually died away in Italy.

The trade of poisoning, although long practiced in France, became what may justly be termed "epidemic" there in the latter half of the seventeenth century. So prevalent was this odious crime that any one in a position where his death might prove of decided advantage to others, exercised the greatest precaution as to every morsel of food he ate, and every drop of fluid he drank. At dinners and banquets, following the custom of the ancients, all food was brought to the table in covered dishes. We still follow this practice to a large extent, our object being to keep the food warm; but the origin of the fashion, or invention, was to guard against the introduction of poison into the dishes while being carried from the kitchen to the dining-room or banqueting hall.

As an illustration of the awful frequency of death from this cause, mention may be made of an expression in a letter of Madame de Sevignè, written about 1680, to the effect that "Frenchmen" and "Poisoners" would soon become synonymous terms.

Perhaps the most notorious French poisoner of this time, the reign of Louis XIV., was Marie Marguerite Brinvilliers. She was the daughter of Dreux d'Aubray, Lieutenant of Paris, and was carefully raised and well educated. Madame de Sevignè, already quoted, refers to her as mild and agreeable in her manners, and offering no traces on her beautiful countenance of the evil soul within. In 1651 she was married to the Marquis de Brinvilliers, a loose and dissipated character, with whom she lived most unhappily for some years. The Marquis introduced to his wife the notorious Sainte Croix, which introduction seems to have been the beginning of her downfall, which ultimately reached most appalling depths. Sainte Croix had been confined in an Italian prison, where he formed the acquaintance of a skilful compounder of poisons, named Exili, from whom he appears to have learned much of the diabolical art which he later practiced in France. Madame Brinvilliers' liaisons with Sainte Croix became so notorious that her father, M. d'Aubray, caused him to be thrown into the Bastile for a whole year. While in the Bastile he is said to have obtained further instructions in the preparations of poisons. During her lover's confinement, this detestable and hypocritical woman affected the greatest piety, visiting the hospitals and devoting all her time to acts of charity.

Released from the Bastile, Sainte Croix hastened to rejoin his mistress, whose devotional spasm seems to have terminated at the same date. A dissolute spendthrift, without means of his own, Sainte Croix now threw himself upon Madame Brinvilliers, whose portion was far from sufficient to support his reckless extravagance. Accordingly, he set about devising a scheme to put himself in funds. His plan, while atrocious in the extreme, as viewed by men possessed of the smallest spark of humanity, was exceedingly simple from the standpoint of

this scoundrel. M. d'Aubray was a man of great wealth, and his death, together with that of his two sons, would make Madame Brinvilliers the heiress to one-half of his estate. Such a scheme would have staggered an ordinary murderer, but it was a mere bagatelle to this sanguinary villain. He hastened to communicate his plan to his mistress, who, so far from manifesting any horror at the prospective death of her father and two brothers, accepted the suggestion with the utmost complacency, and agreed to aid in its consummation. Poisoning, as a matter of course, was the means decided upon for the murders. Marie entered into the plan with a gusto that seems astonishing, even in one so depraved. She worked with Sainte Croix in compounding poisons and soon became almost as expert as he.

The demonstrating of the effects of the poisons was intrusted to Marie. She used to administer doses to dogs, rabbits and pigeons. Afterwards, to gain more definite results, she bethought herself of her hospital experience, and visited many of them, where she administered doses of the poison to the sick, to whom, with apparent charitable motives, she brought soup and delicacies. These experiments were not designed to kill the victims, but merely to give her an opportunity to study the first effects of the poisons. Afterwards she poisoned a pigeon pie which was eaten by guests at her father's table. That she might fully master the infernal art of slow poisoning, she procured an antidote from Sainte Croix and tried the effects of the poison upon herself. Satisfied at last that exactly the right combination had been secured, this most unnatural woman began her operations. The first victim she selected was her gray-haired father, to whom she administered the first doses with her own hand in his chocolate. For eight months she continued to alternately kiss and poison the old man. At length her patience became exhausted, and, at St. Croix's suggestion, she administered a fatal dose. His death was apparently the result of disease, and no suspicion was aroused.

The two deeply-grieved sons of the murdered man returned home from one of the provinces to assist in the last sad rites

of their dead parent. Neither of the murderous conspirators faltered in the execution of the fearful plan they had deliberately concocted. The arrival of the two young men was their doom. Sainte Croix now secured the assistance of a domestic servant, Juan Amelin, alias Chausseè, who assisted in administering the poison. They proceeded more rapidly than they had in the case of the father, and within six weeks both of the young men were dead.

These deaths excited some suspicion, but, owing to the insidious nature of the agents employed, there was nothing tangible upon which to base an accusation. But the work was not yet all accomplished; a sister of Marie remained, who was entitled to one-half of the estate. Sainte Croix had no idea of dividing the vast fortune, and at once took steps to murder the young lady; she seems to have become suspicious, however, and saved her life by promptly quitting Paris.

So far, the wicked woman acted at the instigation of her lover, but now she conceived a plot of her own, which was the poisoning of her husband, the Marquis Brinvilliers, from whom she was separated, but not divorced. Her motive in committing this crime was her ardent desire to marry Sainte Croix. But in this she appears to have made a decided miscalculation. Now that she had sunk to his own depraved level, her accomplice no longer cared for the wicked woman, and had no intention of marrying her. He seemed to acquiesce in her proposal, and undertook to further her plans. Instead of doing this, however, he undertook to defeat her murderous designs. While the Marquise poisoned him one day, Sainte Croix administered an antidote the next. In this way his life was saved, though his constitution was ruined.

But evil does not always triumph, and the day of retribution was at hand; soon after the escape of the Marquis de Brinvilliers from a frightful death, Sainte Croix himself met a fearful end, which would seem to justify the belief in "poetic justice." While working in his improvised laboratory, owing to the deadly fumes constantly emanating from the poisonous material employed, Sainte Croix was compelled to wear a glass mask. On this occasion his mask slipped off and he was

overcome by the noxious vapors. The following day his corpse was found in a little room in an obscure street that he had fitted up as a laboratory. As there was nothing about his person to indicate his identity, his body and effects were taken possession of by the authorities. Among other things a small box was found, to which the following remarkable document was attached:

"I humbly beg, that those into whose hands this box may fall will do me the favor to deliver it into the hands only of the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, who resides in the Rue Neuve St. Paul, as everything it contains concerns her, and belongs to her alone; and as besides, there is nothing in it that can be of use to any person but her. In case she shall be dead before me, it is my wish that it be burned, with everything it contains, without opening or altering anything. In order that no one may plead ignorance I swear by the God that I adore, and by all that is held most sacred, that I assert nothing but the truth; and if my intentions, just and reasonable as they are, be thwarted in this point by any persons, I charge their conscience with it, both in this world and that which is to come, in order that I may unload mine. I protest that this is my last will. Done at Paris, May 25, 1672. SAINTE CROIX."

This box, being opened, was found to contain several vials, a number of papers and a number of powders. Among the papers was found a promissory note of the Marquise de Brinvilliers, for thirty thousand francs, payable to the order of Sainte Croix. It also contained other papers implicating her and the servant, Chausseè, in the recent murders.

Learning of the death of her accomplice, the Marquise, being unable to obtain possession of the box, with the contents of which she seems to have been familiar, hurriedly quitted Paris. The next morning the police were upon her track, but she succeeded in eluding them and in reaching England. In the meantime, Chausseè was not so fortunate, being an ignorant man and knowing nothing of the damaging evidence in the possession of the police, and was promptly arrested. Being subjected to torture, Chausseè made a full confession, implicating the Marquise. He was condemned and sentenced to be broken on the wheel, and the sentence was carried into execution in March, 1673, in the city of Paris.

The Marquise de Brinvilliers appears to have resided for some three years in England, but early in 1676, thinking that the rigor of the pursuit was over, and that she would be safe on the continent, she went secretly to Liége. But the authorities were on the alert, and obtained information of her movements. They located her in Liége, and sent an officer, Desgraise by name, to apprehend the murderess. The officer found that she had taken refuge within the walls of a convent, where the law could not reach her. Desgraise, who was a detective and seems to have been in advance of his age, was not discouraged. Disguised as a priest, he entered the convent and obtained an interview with the Marquise. Skilled in the art of flattery, he pleased her vanity and won her confidence. He then proceeded to make love to her, and finally succeeded in inducing her to promise to meet him outside the walls of the convent. The foolish woman came promptly to keep her appointment, and was at once placed under arrest.

She was speedily brought to trial, and abundant proof of her guilt was produced. In addition to the dying declaration of Chausseè and many other incriminating matters, a paper, in her handwriting, that had been found among the effects of Sainte Croix, distinctly showed her guilt. In this she detailed to him the misdeeds of her life and distinctly referred to the murder of her father and brothers. No trial in France ever excited more universal interest than that of this poisoner. The details of her crimes were published and eagerly read by all classes of people. It is said that this wide publicity worked great harm by suggesting the idea of secret poisoning to many who had never before thought of such a thing.

If her crimes had been many and atrocious, her punishment was surely heavy. She was found guilty in the Superior Criminal Court of Paris, on July 16, 1676, for the murder of her father and brothers. She was condemned to be drawn on a hurdle, with her feet bare, a rope about her neck, and a burning torch in her hand, to the great entrance of the cathedral of Notre Dame, where she was to make the *amende honorable* in sight of all the people; to be taken from thence to the Place de Grevè, and there to be beheaded. Her body

was afterwards to be burned, and her ashes scattered to the winds.

Shortly before her execution she made a full confession, and continued reckless to the very last. Madame de Sevignè says that, when on the hurdle, on her way to the scaffold, she entreated her confessor to exert his influence with the executioner to place himself next to her, that his body might hide from her view "that scoundrel Desgraise, who had entrapped her." She also asked the ladies, who had been drawn to their windows to witness the procession, what they were looking at, adding, "A pretty sight you have come to see, truly!" She laughed when on the scaffold, dying as she had lived, impenitent and heartless.

It is said that the Marquise supplied poisons to others, and several people whose relatives, standing between them and wealth, had mysteriously died, fell under suspicion, and some were placed on trial. M. de Penautier, treasurer of the province of Languedoc, was thrown into the Bastile, where he was confined for some months on the charge of poisoning and having procured his material from Sainte Croix and de Brinvilliers, but was ultimately released. The Cardinal de Bonzy was accused of being an accomplice of Penautier, for the reason that several people to whom he was compelled to pay annuities which were charged upon his estates, suddenly and mysteriously died one after another. The cardinal, in talking of these annuities afterwards, used to say, "Thanks to my star, I have outlived them all!" A wit, seeing him and Penautier riding in the same carriage, cried out, in allusion to this expression, "There go the Cardinal de Bonzy and his star!"

And now poisoning became a veritable epidemic in France. The mania spread to almost every province and the prisons were filled with people accused of this detestable crime. Nearly every evil passion of the human heart found an outlet in the use of slow poison, which speedily took the place of almost all other means of taking human life. To check this rapidly growing evil, Louis XIV. instituted a special court, known as the "Chambre Ardente," or Burning Chamber, with

very extensive powers for the trial and punishment of poisoners.

At this time two women made themselves especially notorious, and were the means of sending hundreds of people to their graves. They were named Lavigoreux and Lavoisin, and resided in Paris. They were imitators of La Spara, and seemed to have manufactured essentially the same poisons and disposed of them by similar methods. Their trade was carried on chiefly with women who wished a safe means to dispose of their husbands, though in some instances husbands bought their poisons to destroy their wives. These women had two ostensible callings; that of midwives and fortune-tellers. In their latter capacity they foretold to wives the speedy death of their husbands, and to needy relatives the approaching dissolution of rich relatives; taking care at the same time to sell, at extravagant prices, the means of making their prognostications "come true." They used to predict approaching death by some ordinary occurrence, as the breaking of china or glassware, and then hire servants to bring about the predicted catastrophe exactly at the appointed time. Their occupation as midwives possessed them of many family secrets which they did not fail to use to dreadful advantage.

How long these monsters had carried on their nefarious trade was never ascertained. Their practices were discovered near the end of the year 1679. They were tried, convicted, and, on February 22, 1680, were burned alive on the Place de Grevè; but not until their hands had first been bored through with red-hot irons, and then cut off. Many of their accomplices and patrons throughout France were arrested, tried and put to death by hanging and burning at the stake. Within a few months not less than fifty people, mostly women, are said to have suffered death on the charge of poisoning.

The woman Lavoisin kept a list of the persons who frequented her house for the purpose of buying poisons. Upon her arrest, this was secured by the police, and greatly aided in bringing her guilty accomplices to justice. Three quite illustrious names were found upon this list, those of Marshal de Luxembourg, the Countess de Soissons and the Duchess de

Bouillon. The marshal seems only to have been guilty of a piece of discreditable folly in visiting a woman of this description, but the popular voice at the time imputed to him something more than folly. The author of the "Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe Since the Peace of Utrecht," says: "The miserable gang who dealt in poison and prophesy alleged that he had sold himself to the devil, and that a young girl of the name of Dupin had been poisoned by his means. Among other stories they said that he had made a contract with the devil in order to marry his son to the daughter of the Marquis of Louvois. To this atrocious and absurd accusation the marshal, who had surrendered himself at the Bastile on the first accusation, replied with the mingled sentiment of pride and innocence: 'When Mathieu de Montmorenci, my ancestor, married the widow of Louis-le-gros, he did not have recourse to the devil, but to the states-general, in order to obtain for the minor king the support of the house of Montmorenci.' This brave man was imprisoned in a cell six feet and a half long, and his trial, which was interrupted for several weeks, lasted altogether fourteen months. No judgment was pronounced upon him."

The Countess de Soissons was accused of attempting the death of the Queen of Spain by means of "succession powders," as these infernal mixtures were sometimes called. She avoided a trial by fleeing to Brussels, but was never able to clear herself of the awful charge. The Duchess de Bouillon was confined for several months in the Bastile, and finally tried by the Chambre Ardente; she was not convicted, and was probably innocent.

Notwithstanding the extreme measures adopted by the government to bring poisoners to justice, and the terrible punishment meted out, it was not until two years after the execution of the two noted Parisian poisoners that the horrid mania was abated. It is said that more than one hundred persons were hanged or burned before this was effected. Owing to the subtle nature of the medium employed, it is certain that but a very small proportion of those guilty of poisoning were ever detected and brought to justice. The aggregate

of murders must have been enormous, and shows the low estimate in which human life was held two centuries ago. The history of the "slow poisoners" also demonstrates that there is, for lack of a better term, what may be called a "contagion of crime." This is difficult to account for, unless on the theory that familiarity robs death and crime of much of their horrors, and that a bad example is more commonly followed than a good one.

In the early part of the present century, many districts of India were infested with professional poisoners. This class embraced both Hindoos and Mohammedans. They resembled the Thugs, whose operations are described in the preceding chapter, in that their trade was murder, but, unlike them, never operated in bands, or even pairs, but carried on the nefarious work singly. A fundamental principle upon which these wretches operated seems to have been that it was folly to trust an accomplice when a murder was to be committed. A given district was usually selected by poisoners, generally a territory covering an area of about one hundred miles in radius, and after three or four murders had been committed therein, a move was made to another locality. Nearly all the victims were selected from the lower castes, owners and drivers of carts being among those most frequently devoted to death. The poison most commonly used was arsenic, although sometimes the assassins employed Daturia, a deadly drug prepared from the thorn tree, whose nature and effects are similar to those of belladona. It was not a difficult task to induce a driver to drink, nor was it hard to dispose of his effects, particularly through the agency of a broker.

As a rule the poisoners affected the dress and ostensible calling of small merchants, particularly dealers in grain. Arriving at a village, the wretch would inquire for a yoke of oxen and a cart, which he wished to hire to bring from the country grain or some other commodity, which he represented himself as buying. He would always select the best cattle he could procure, and would disarm any suspicion that might arise in the mind of the simple villager, by paying the hire in advance and stipulating that the owner, or some one repre-

senting him, should accompany the merchant to drive the team.

The social customs of India permitted considerable familiarity between a traveler and his driver. The two conversed constantly, and very commonly ate and drank together. The latter custom afforded many opportunities for the administration of poison. It was rarely, however, that any attempt was made upon the life of the driver until the district from which he came had been left behind. When the victim began to feel the effect of the drug, he was persuaded to lie down in the bottom of the cart, the traveler offering to act as driver. Should the first dose not prove fatal, another was administered under the guise of medicine.

Like the Thugs, the Poisoners had peculiar methods of disposing of the bodies of their victims. Very frequently the murderer would place the body under a convenient tree by the roadside in an attitude of sleep, and cover it with a sheet. When discovered, the natural inference would be that the corpse was that of a traveler who had lain down to rest and had expired from natural causes. It frequently happened, however, that the surroundings were not favorable to such a disposition of the body, in which event the Poisoner would sometimes carry it around in his cart for several days until a good opportunity presented itself for disposing of it. Indeed, some Poisoners adopted this method as safer than leaving the body by the roadside, for the reason that decomposition would render identification difficult, if not impossible. Many years ago a notorious Poisoner was captured and confessed to the commission of not less than eighteen murders of this character, even gloating over the recounting of each scene. This villain was a Mohammedan, and carried the poison in a silver charm tied on his arm.

The extent to which secret poisoning prevailed in India was never ascertained, for the reason that the existence of these wretches was long unknown, but beyond a doubt vast numbers of people were murdered, usually for the possession of cattle and such small effects as the drivers had about their persons. Owing to radical action on the part of the govern-

ment of Great Britain, the Poisoners, like the Thugs, have well-nigh disappeared from India, although their craft is doubtless practiced to some extent, even at the present day.

About fifty years ago there was a decided revival of slow poisoning in England, and a large number of cases were discovered, and many of the perpetrators punished. It assumed almost the form of a mania, one wretch imitating the methods of others. As a rule, these professional poisoners were women of the lowest order, their first victims being usually their husbands and frequently their children. A more abhorrent motive for crime can hardly be imagined than was usually present in these cases—the desire to obtain from clubs to which they had subscribed, money for the burial of their victims. The discovery of these infernal practices led to the enactment of laws greatly restricting the sale of arsenic and other poisons. This mania was abated in a few years, and poisoning is not now especially frequent in England.

The system of insuring the lives of children for a small amount, upon the payment of trifling sums weekly, for the express purpose of paying the expenses of funerals, in cases of death, the author regards as offering inducements to unnatural parents to poison children whom they regard as troublesome. Several suspicious cases have already arisen, and, in some States, legislative action, looking to the suppression of the practice, has been taken.

Discoveries in chemistry during recent years, by which the presence of poison in the human system can be almost certainly detected, have greatly discouraged its use as a secret means of taking life, yet a large number of recent cases could readily be cited. It is safe to predict that the "epidemics" of poisoning which we have detailed in the present chapter will never be repeated.

CHAPTER XVIII

DUELING

The practice of dueling, in the sense in which the term is at present employed, is of comparatively modern origin. The Latins used the word from which we derive "duel" to designate a war between two nations. Fights to the death have been common since the beginning of the world's history; but in these the meeting by appointment, each combatant being supported by friends called "seconds," was absent. Among the earliest of these combats may be mentioned the one between David and Goliath. And, singularly enough, in this may be found the principle which was at the root of the practice when it was first definitely established, the date of which may be put down as at the beginning of the seventh century of the Christian era. The Israelites and Philistines were at war and the armies of each were arrayed for battle, a valley separating, when Goliath, the mighty giant of the Philistines, issued his challenge for a single combat with the mightiest champion the enemy could send against him. David, the son of Jesse, a young man, presented himself. When Saul sought to dissuade him from the seemingly hopeless undertaking, he answered: "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said unto David: "Go, and the Lord be with thee."

This brief colloquy furnishes the key to the beginning of dueling. It was a general belief, religious or superstitious, that the Almighty would interfere, directly and miraculously, in the conflict, to preserve the innocent and punish the guilty; in other words, that he who was the weakest physically, or the least trained or poorest equipped for the conflict, so

long as he had God on his side, would surely triumph. In an early day, this method of settling disputed questions and deciding the guilt or innocence of one accused of crime, received the sanction of the law and was very frequently resorted to in England. This legal dueling was termed "wager of battel," or "trial by battel." The only people exempt from "trial by battel" were peers of the realm, citizens of London, women, infants, and men who were over sixty years of age, or who were lame or blind; these might demand a trial by jury. In criminal cases the parties fought themselves, but in those of a civil character the matter was decided by champions.

This mode of procedure was the same in civil and criminal cases. The combat was carried on in the presence of the court, who judged of its fairness. The defendant, or accused, as the case might be, threw down his glove and declared that he would prove his right or defend it with his body. The plaintiff, or accuser, then took up the glove and announced that he was prepared to make good his demand or charge, body for body. This done, the parties grasped each other's hands and solemnly and with great formality joined issue before the court. The weapons employed were wooden batons, or staves, an ell—forty-five inches—in length, and four-cornered leathern targets. As a preliminary to the conflict, each of the combatants was obliged to solemnly swear that they would not employ arts of magic or witchcraft. Unless one or the other of the parties was sooner killed or disabled, the "battel" lasted until the stars appeared in the evening. The one who killed or got the better of the other was most solemnly adjudged the successful suitor before the court. Upon a charge of murder, if the accused was slain he was at once adjudged guilty, and his blood declared attainted; which meant that his heirs could not inherit his property; and if, before the appearance of the stars, he became unable, or unwilling, to continue the fight, he was found guilty, and immediately sentenced and executed.

With the dawn of more enlightened and more humane times, "trial by battel" gradually disappeared in England,

trial by jury taking its place, as well as that of "wager by witnesses," where the party triumphed who could bring the most people into court to swear that they believed him. But this method of deciding disputes was not abolished by act of Parliament, and, as late as 1818, a party in the court of the King's Bench demanded his right of "trial by battel," as secured to him by the ancient common law of the realm. He was sustained in this position by the court, Lord Ellenborough, a very eminent lawyer and jurist, remarking that "the general law of the land is in favor of the wager of battel, and it is our duty to pronounce the law as it is, and not as we may wish it to be; whatever prejudices, therefore, may justly exist against this mode of trial, still, as it is the law of the land, the court must pronounce judgment for it." Happily, the pugnacious litigant who obtained this judgment was induced to go no further, and as a result a statute, the 5th Geo. III. c. 46, was passed, by which the shocking ordeal was wholly abolished.

The great French philosopher, Montesquieu, in his "Spirit of Laws," presents a very plausible and quite convincing argument to show that the modern practice of dueling and the "laws of honor" had their origin in the barbarous judicial combat we have described. It seems probable that "trial by battel," in turn, had its origin in the various "ordeals," by which the guilt or innocence of an accused party was submitted to some test whereby the judgment of the Almighty was supposed to be definitely obtained. That this practice is of great antiquity is shown from the circumstance that ordeals were resorted to in the old Bible times. In Numbers V. it is provided that a woman accused of adultery, having first taken solemn oaths as to her innocence, should drink certain "bitter waters" offered by the priest. In the event of her guilt it would prove fatal, but would be rendered harmless if she were innocent.

In the early days of dueling, doubtless the belief that the issue of the encounter would be determined by a special act of Divine Providence, was almost universal. So far it had an apparent origin in sentiments of religion, but was greatly distorted in the middle ages, and was so turned and twisted as

to be made to justify the foulest wrongs. The homicidal impulse was given free rein, and arguments and authorities to show the righteousness of taking human life were never wanting.

Although dueling, in the strict sense of the term, was unknown to the ancient Romans, personal conflicts between individuals, members of opposing armies, were by no means uncommon. Among these prearranged combats, one of decided interest has come down from the ancient Roman writers. While Rome was but a youthful kingdom, it became involved in a war with the Albans, whose rich territory the Romans greatly desired to possess. While the two hostile armies were resting in opposing camps, the Alban commander sought an interview with the Roman general. The result was the forming of an agreement to decide the relative supremacy of the two nations by means of personal combat. It happened that there were in the Roman forces three brothers known as the Horatii, highly renowned as men at arms, while in the Alban army were three other brothers, of about equal size and prowess, known as the Curiatii. It was agreed that the conflict should take place between these respective champions, and that the supremacy of one state over the other should be determined by the result. The combat took place in the presence of the two contending hosts, each man, whether Roman or Alban, watching it with the keenest interest. Two of the Horatii were killed and all their antagonists wounded. The surviving Roman brother, perceiving that it would be folly to contend against such odds, feigned flight, thus anticipating by many centuries the tactics of Napoleon Bonaparte, who always strove to separate the divisions of the opposing army. The wounded Curiatii, urged on by the exultant shouts of their comrades in arms, who believed that triumph was about to descend upon the standard of Alba, pursued. Weak from wounds, they advanced with uncertain step and at an unequal rate of speed. The wily Roman, looking over his shoulder, saw that one was far in advance, and, turning, relentlessly and quickly gave him his death wound. His ruse had proved successful, and he dispatched the brothers of the fallen soldier

in like manner and with the utmost ease. The result was the absorption of the Alban territory and the people into the Roman State, and thenceforth the name of Alba disappears from the pages of ancient history.

Nearly all the peculiar customs of the middle ages had their origin in and among the Germanic nations, and the practice of dueling appears to be no exception to this rule. About the first trace of duels that can be found in history appears among the Burgundians in 501. In that year King Gundebald introduced the duel into legal proceedings, in lieu of an oath. Louis the Debonnaire was the first of the French kings to permit litigants to appeal to arms. This was about the beginning of the ninth century. From this origin, however, the duel rapidly degenerated into a method for redressing either real or supposed private wrongs. It must be remembered, too, that during those early centuries a battle between contending armies was largely an aggregation of personal encounters. Men fought from instinct as well as by habit, and it is not strange that a practice originally sanctioned by law for one purpose should be adopted by individuals for another and quite different use. It is also likely that the customs of knight errantry were, in some degree, responsible for familiarizing the popular mind with the practice of personal combat, and inducing a general respect therefor.

Nor was dueling lacking of the highest earthly indorsement; several kings having more than "winked" at the practice. In 1527 Francis I. of France sent a challenge to the Emperor Charles V., with whom he was at war, to decide their quarrel by the result of a single combat. Charles promptly accepted the challenge, but, for some reason, the duel never took place. Henry emphasized his royal example by declaring that a lie could only be borne without satisfaction by a base-born churl. This had a decided effect upon the world, and from that time dueling became very fashionable, and consequently very frequent. While the law did not recognize the practice as legitimate, it failed to positively condemn it, and courts had neither the authority nor the disposition to interfere with its prevalence. A gentleman who received an

affront, even although trivial, felt himself obliged, in honor, to demand from his adversary reparation at the point of the sword. Not to do so was considered evidence that the party affronted was destitute of personal courage, and unfit for association with men of honor. It might have been supposed that this readiness to avenge an insult would have induced considerable caution before one was offered. Such, however, was not the case. A man cherishing hostilities toward another would frequently either give or provoke an affront, in order that he might have a pretext for meeting him in deadly combat. From the upper classes this custom spread among those of ruder manners, and much of the best blood of Christendom was, in consequence, foolishly spilled. Even women placed the seal of their approval upon the barbarous custom by showing especial favor to those whose achievements in this direction had been particularly noteworthy; high dames of the French and English courts receiving, with every mark of friendship and honor, men destitute of wit, wisdom or fortune, but who had acquired a reputation as famous duelists.

As might be expected, the great prevalence of this murderous practice led to a reaction in which the wise and humane rulers of Christendom took an active part. In the meantime, the Christian Church took a decided stand against the cruel and demoralizing practice. This was true both of the Roman Catholics and the Reformers. The former decreed the excommunication of all participants in duels, seconds as well as principals, while the latter did everything in their power to discourage and prevent them, by teaching the enormous sin committed by duelists. Henry II., who succeeded to the throne of France in 1547, took an entirely different view of "affairs of honor" than had been entertained by his royal father, Francis I., and prohibited the practice, solemnly vowing that it should not prevail during his reign. This action was caused by the result of a duel fought in his presence by two of his friends, Francis de la Chastaignereè and Guy Chabot de Jarnac, in which the latter was killed. But neither his oath nor his royal edict had any perceptible effect, and the practice of private dueling continued to increase in France,

where more duels were fought at this time than in any other country in Europe.

Henry II. reigned but twelve years, and left the throne of France to his sons, three of whom reigned in succession, all being largely under the influence of his widow, the queen dowager. This woman, the infamous Catherine de Medici, whose plot to murder the Huguenots has been treated of at length in another chapter, was not of a character to discourage dueling, or any other vice, for that matter. While she continued virtual monarch of France, her family, and the nobility of the realm, set most pernicious examples, which were eagerly followed by the people. In consequence of the looseness of the prevailing morals, and the deadly feud between Catholics and Protestants, the practice of dueling constantly increased.

In the reign of Henry IV. efforts were made to check this rapidly growing evil, and in 1599 the Parliament of Paris declared all persons who were either principals or seconds in a duel to be rebels to the king. In 1609 Henry increased the existing penalties and even introduced the punishment of death in extreme cases. But this was without avail, largely, perhaps, because the measure was forced upon him by popular feeling, while he was far from disposed to rigidly enforce his own edict. As a matter of fact, he seems to have personally regarded the practice with favor. Upon one occasion, when he had given Crequè his royal permission to fight Don Philip of Savoy, he added, "If I were not the King, I would be your second." Henry was very free in granting pardons to convicted duelists, the effect being to decidedly increase the interdicted practice.

Another cause of the prevailing wickedness existed in the religious conflict, already alluded to. It was while Henry sat upon the throne that the first determined effort was made by the crown to insure the religious freedom of the subject. In the breasts of the Huguenots, many of whom belonged to the highest rank of French nobility, was rankling the recollection of a multitude of outrages committed upon their ancestors solely because of their reluctance to profess adherence to the

established religion of their country. Not a few of the descendants of those who had been proscribed during the reign of the earlier monarchs, finding themselves restored to rank and fortune by the promulgation of the Edict of Nantes in 1598, were not slow in seeking to avenge themselves upon those whom they regarded as the murderers of their ancestors. Insults flew back and forth, and challenges to mortal combat were far more frequent than were the caprices of passion during the existence of the Second Empire. Indeed, it is said that not less than four thousand gentlemen of France, either Catholic or Protestant, died upon the field of honor during the first eighteen years of the reign of one who was professedly an apostle of religious freedom.

Louis XIII., son of Henry IV. and Marie de Medici, who ascended the throne of France upon the death of his father, May 14, 1610, seems to have had a natural and very decided aversion to the shedding of human blood. He possessed a feeble nature, but, perhaps so far as he was able, attempted to suppress the prevailing vice of the kingdom. He issued several edicts which he thought well calculated to discourage dueling, but which led to small results. That even a partial degree of success followed was due to the influence and interference of Cardinal Richelieu, who, while nominally merely a priest of the church, was virtually the power behind the throne and dominated the policy of the French monarchy. This prelate, whose character was a strange admixture of much that was good with all that was bad, whose lust of power stopped at nothing which he believed to be adapted to its gratification, and who, under the guise of a religious adviser and personal friend, absolutely controlled the national and international policy of Louis XIII., was quick to perceive that dueling might, under certain circumstances, be tolerated as a means for the advancement and perpetuation of his own power. As priest and prelate, it was impossible for him to give official sanction to the practice of seeking revenge through any means whatever.

Accordingly, probably at his suggestion, Louis XIII. issued an imperial edict making every participant in a duel, whether

as principal or as a second, a criminal. For the sending of a challenge there was imposed the forfeiture of property and imprisonment for three years. Should the loss of life ensue from a hostile meeting, the successful combatant was to be held guilty of murder, and, if convicted, was to be capitally punished. How thoroughly this edict was carried into execution, and how lax was the morality inculcated by those priests of the Catholic Church who recognized Cardinal Richelieu as their superior, is best attested by the fact that duels among gentlemen of the King's household were not infrequent, while the authorities, at the head of whom stood the great cardinal, one of the monumental figures of his age, took no pains to bring the offenders to justice.

During the reign of this monarch dueling assumed great proportions, and became so prevalent that Lord Herbert, the English ambassador, wrote home to his government that there was scarcely a Frenchman worth looking at who had not killed his man. It was during this reign that two distinguished noblemen, the greatest duelists of the day, Count de Bouteville and the Marquis de Beurin, were tried and beheaded for persisting to fight after being forbidden to do so.

Louis XIV., the son of Louis XIII., succeeded his father in 1643, at the age of five years, the kingdom being ruled by his mother, Anne of Austria, as regent, with the famous Cardinal Mazarin as prime minister. Mazarin died in 1661, when Louis suddenly assumed the reins of government and astonished the country with the vigor of his policy. During the regency of Anne dueling was very common, in many instances several persons, sometimes four or five, fighting on either side. This practice continued after the death of Mazarin. Two very sanguinary affairs of this kind having taken place, in which several persons of the highest rank were slain, the king determined to put an end to the practice. He published an edict in 1687 forbidding it under the highest penalties, which, unlike most of his predecessors, he had the firmness to inflict; and this measure, together with a solemn agreement which was entered into amongst the nobility themselves, led to its almost total abolition at that time.

We search in vain for traces of the duel in England during the days of the Anglo-Saxons. Indeed, it does not appear to have existed there until after the Norman conquest. We have already alluded to the judicial form in which it existed in England. This continued for centuries, and did not become entirely obsolete until the reign of Elizabeth. Sir Henry Spelman gives an account of a trial by battle which occurred in the year 1571, but which terminated without an actual combat having been fought.

But, although the practice had lost judicial sanction, private duels were quite frequent during her long reign, and likewise that of her successor, James I., by whom a severe statute against them was enacted in Scotland in 1600, while he was still ruler of that country. James I., whose name has become well-nigh synonymous with all that is weak and cowardly in the nature of man, was himself fearful of the very sight of a naked sword blade, and attempted, after he ascended the English throne, to discountenance the resort to personal combat as a method of avenging personal wrongs. How far he succeeded in this attempt is shown by the circumstance that, during his reign, the practice was carried on, not only by members of the aristocracy, but also by artisans and tradespeople. James was always deeply grieved when he learned that a duel had been fought between members of his court. In the year 1609, a personal encounter occurred between two of his favorites, Sir George Orton and Sir James Stewart, and when the King learned that both were dead he was so deeply affected that he directed that their bodies should be buried in the same grave.

During the civil war of the Commonwealth, the minds of almost all Englishmen were so much occupied with grave and weighty affairs that little time was left for questions of etiquette, in consequence of which dueling declined to a marked extent. But with the accession to the throne of Charles II., the old cavalier spirit again asserted itself, and "affairs of honor" became of alarming frequency. Although a voluptuary by instinct and by practice a profligate, he cherished the greatest detestation for dueling, but the weakness of his char-

acter forbade any decisive action by him upon any subject. Indeed, under the reign of no other English monarch was the rage for dueling more violently manifested. Ballrooms, masquerades, theatres and the open streets were constantly the scenes of strife and bloodshed. Addison, in the "Spectator," refers to the existence of a London club of duelists, in which no one was eligible as a member unless he had "fought his man." The president of this "delectable" organization owed his elevation to that high office, to the fact that he had killed not less than half a dozen men in single combat. Seated around him at the festal board were arranged the other members of the club according to their rank, which was determined by the number of those which each had killed in personal encounters.

In 1679 Charles, by and with the advice and consent of Parliament, issued a proclamation announcing that any one killing another person in a duel should be held for trial for murder, and that upon conviction no pardon would be granted. In spite of all this, however, during the reign of this monarch, which lasted from May 29, 1660, to February 6, 1685, there occurred in England not less than one hundred and ninety-six duels, in which seventy-five persons were killed and one hundred and eight more or less severely wounded. It was no uncommon thing during that period for the seconds to so cordially espouse the cause of their respective principals as to engage in mortal combat themselves, upon the same ground, and at the same time.

Among the prime favorites of this dissolute monarch may be reckoned the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Howard and the depraved Duchess of Shrewsbury. It is recorded that upon one occasion Lord Howard gave a grand fête at Spring Gardens, near Charing Cross, London, in honor of the profligate woman last named. Among those in attendance was the gay and fascinating Sydney, who largely monopolized the attention and the smiles of the Duchess, much to the anger of Lord Howard, whose fête Sydney did not hesitate to ridicule. Hardly had the festivities come to an end on the following morning when Howard sent a challenge to his rival. The meeting was

quickly "arranged"; Sydney received three serious thrusts from Howard's sword, and was carried from the field dangerously wounded, while his second was left dead upon the grass, pierced through the heart by the weapon of Lord Howard's second. Naturally the tragedy was the cause of an immense scandal, not only at court, but throughout London as well. Among the first to hear the news was the Duke of Shrewsbury. His excitement knew no bounds, and, having become satisfied of his wife's dishonor, he promptly sent a challenge to the Duke of Buckingham, whom he charged with having carried on an intrigue with the Duchess. Buckingham accepted the challenge with as little emotion as he might have displayed in drinking a glass of wine; and it is stated that the Duchess of Shrewsbury, disguised as a page, accompanied him to the field and held his horse while the latter fought with and killed her husband. English writers generally describe the killing of Shrewsbury as having been nothing short of cold-blooded murder; yet, notwithstanding all the terrible circumstances with which it was surrounded, and despite the urgent and repeated remonstrances of Queen Henrietta, the King, shortly after the commission of this frightful crime, received Buckingham with open arms.

During the reign of William III. some attempts were made to suppress this evil and demoralizing practice, but, owing to the sentiment of the great body of the people, they proved of small avail. In 1612 his successor, Queen Anne, called the attention of Parliament to the subject in a speech from the throne, but the suggestion failed to find favor; the bill presented by the government was promptly rejected, and the practice continued to prevail, encouraged by the unsuccessful efforts that had been made to repress it.

"Gretna Green" has not been more renowned as a place for clandestine marriages than has Hyde Park, London, been noted as a "field of honor." Almost innumerable duels have been fought there, and in the latter part of the eighteenth century it became the common meeting ground for members of the aristocracy. The frequent meetings there excited the widest interest and aroused the most ardent admiration of the

common people, who began to imitate the fashionable practices of their social superiors. One portion of the enclosure has become almost classic, because of its having been selected as the field in which "little affairs of honor" might be arranged. This celebrated portion of the famous park was generally known as "The Ring." The spot has been the scene of many a sanguinary conflict, and at one time was the favorite resort for duelists. In the year 1712 occurred here one of the most celebrated duels of the eighteenth century. Charles, Lord Mohun, and James, the fourth Duke of Hamilton, were the principals in a bloody tragedy. At one of the fashionable London clubs angry words passed between them, and on the following morning Lord Mohun sent his friend, General Macartney, to the duke with a peremptory demand that the latter should withdraw and apologize for the offensive epithet which he had used on the previous evening. The duke declining either to apologize or to retract, a meeting was immediately arranged, General Macartney representing Lord Mohun, and Colonel Hamilton appearing as second to the duke. From all accounts, it would seem that Mohun was more anxious for the encounter than his antagonist. When the parties met, the duke taunted General Macartney with having been the instigator of the conflict; the latter, while deprecating the insinuation, expressed entire readiness to take part in the conflict. The duke, pointing toward Colonel Hamilton, said, "There is my friend; you will find him quite willing to share in my dance." This was enough. Both principals and seconds drew their swords and engaged in combat almost simultaneously. Mohun and the duke inflicted upon each other fatal wounds, but the seconds, who were, perhaps, less enthusiastic, escaped without serious injury. Both of the principals were left dead upon the field. This is supposed to be the most authentic account of this famous encounter, although there are others extant. Historians have unearthed a letter in which is contained a statement that while Lord Mohun was expiring, the duke bent over him and with his sword grasped near its point, stabbed him in the left breast, the point entering the heart of the victim. The same letter

DUEL BETWEEN ALEXANDER HAMILTON AND AARON BURR.—PAGE 337.

is authority for the statement that the duke, after the commission of this dastardly act, was helped in his effort to reach a neighboring house, but dropped dead upon the way, and was carried off in a coach before the chimes of the nearest clock had struck the hour of eight in the morning. His second, Colonel Hamilton, was immediately afterwards apprehended and put on trial at the Old Bailey, where he obtained a verdict of acquittal. The next year, General Macartney surrendered to the authorities, and was duly arraigned. One of the chief witnesses in behalf of the prosecution was Colonel Hamilton, who made oath that he could not be mistaken in stating that the general was the person who had inflicted the fatal wound. In spite of this testimony, however, the jury brought in a verdict of simple manslaughter, and Hamilton, receiving an intimation that it was likely that he would be put on trial for perjury, fled the country. Within four months after his voluntary expatriation, he died, General Macartney surviving upon his native soil until 1730.

Duels have a prominent place in English fiction of this period, the most famous authors recognizing the interest universally taken in the subject, and frequently introducing them into their novels. The same course was taken by the dramatists of that time, although, for the most part, they burlesqued the "field of honor." The prevailing vices and virtues of a people can quite accurately be traced from the pages of contemporary fiction, and the works of Fielding, Smollet, Sheridan and others, not only catered to the public admiration for dueling, but plainly indicate that Hyde Park was regarded as the approved place for a "meeting of two gentlemen," and it was there that their imaginary heroes and villains settled their disputes.

It was in Hyde Park that John Wilkes, M. P., fought another member of Parliament named Samuel Martin. Four shots were exchanged before the honor of the parties was satisfied, or either of them injured. On the fourth exchange of bullets, Wilkes fell, badly wounded, while Martin lost no time in crossing the Channel and gaining in France security from arrest. Wilkes was a bright but most loose and profli-

gate character. He was a writer of considerable ability, but, for the most part, his works were either seditious or obscene. He was twice expelled from Parliament, and for a long time confined in prison; but, after all this, he was made Lord Mayor of London, and served for several years as a member of Parliament.

In October, 1765, a very famous duel was fought upon the same spot, Lieutenant Redmond McGraw, an Irish gentleman, engaging four antagonists. It would hardly be supposed that, in a day when the use of the sword was universally understood, one man could prevail against four, yet such proved to be the case. McGraw was an expert swordsman, and possessed of most remarkable courage. He succeeded in disarming all of his antagonists, receiving in return only a slight flesh wound in the right arm.

Some two years later, two brothers fought in Hyde Park. It seems that they were both paying addresses to the same lady, in consequence of which a bitter quarrel had arisen between them. The hatred was bitter and mutual, and the conflict was to the death. One brother fell, mortally wounded, while the other, instead of remaining to render him such assistance as humanity, and even the "code" required, ran from the field to avoid arrest. In this action the real principles of most duelists are exposed. This man could take the life of his brother, thus braving the vengeance of the Almighty, but had not the courage to face the constables who represented the mere earthly law. Will any candid person say that he was any less a fratricide because his equally vindictive brother had been striving to take his life?

On St. Patrick's day, March 17, 1776, George Garrick, a brother of the famous comedian, David Garrick, fought a duel near "The Ring," with one of the actors of the stock company of the Drury Lane Theatre. The provocation had been the alleged flirtation of Garrick with the actor's wife, a Mrs. Beardsley. At a peculiarly opportune moment, just before the fatal shots were exchanged, the lady appeared upon the scene, and her advent brought about a reconciliation, which, while satisfactory to all parties concerned, prevented a

stain of dishonor from attaching itself to the name borne by the great actor.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the brilliant dramatist and renowned orator, whose first comedy, "The Rivals," contains a scene in which the duel is made ridiculous, himself entered the field of honor. For some cause, the exact nature of which was not made public, he quarreled with an officer of the English army, named Thomas Mathews, a captain in his Majesty's foot. Sheridan sent the challenge, which was promptly accepted by Captain Mathews. "The Ring" in Hyde Park was selected as the place for the meeting. In the meantime, the matter had become public property, and the hostile antagonists found a large and intensely interested audience awaiting the beginning of hostilities. This was more than the combatants had bargained for, and the meeting was postponed by an agreement between the seconds. The "Pillars of Hercules," one of the best known places in London at the present time, was selected as a substitute for "The Ring." Arriving there, the parties, to their infinite disgust, found a larger audience than they had left in Hyde Park. They therefore repaired to the Castle Tavern, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, where they mutually satisfied their wounded honor without any serious results in the way of injuries.

For almost a century the famous "Ring" continued to be the leading dueling ground of England, but space forbids anything like a full account of the sanguinary encounters that have taken place there. It did not lose favor as a field of honor, but ceased to be so employed only when the practice of dueling fell into disuse in England.

The period extending, with some interruptions, from the reign of James I. to the close of the reign of George III., was that in which dueling principally prevailed in England. It is said by good authorities that, during the long reign of the last-named monarch, one hundred and forty persons were engaged as principals, and at least an equal number as seconds. Sixty-nine individuals were killed; and ninety-six wounded, forty-eight seriously, while one hundred and seventy-nine escaped unhurt. It is stated that this large number of duels was fol-

lowed by only eighteen trials, in eight of which the individuals charged were acquitted, while seven were found guilty of manslaughter, and three of murder. The net results, so far as the infliction of judicial punishment was concerned, were two executions and the imprisonment of eight persons during different periods. A considerable proportion of these encounters took place between officers of the army, a circumstance which appears to have been the cause of particular regret to George, who put forth some efforts to abridge the practice, but with only partial success. It was hardly to be expected that when his Royal Highness, the Duke of York, himself engaged in a duel with an officer named Colonel Lennox, as he did in 1789, there could be any decided disapproval of dueling among army officers. The Right Honorable William Pitt, long the prime minister of George III., also furnished a scandalous example to the people of England by engaging in a duel with George Tierney, in 1798.

From the close of the reign of George III., dueling gradually decreased in England, thanks principally to an improved public sentiment, but the practice continued to a considerable extent among the officers of the army and the navy. At last this attracted the attention of the government. In an article of war adopted in 1844, dueling between officers rendered the participants liable to be cashiered upon conviction. This repressive measure was largely induced by the fatal termination of an encounter in 1843 between Colonel Fawcett and Captain Monroe. The year following the adoption of the article, however, two military officers met upon the field of honor, and one of them, Lieutenant Sexton, was killed. The effect of this affair was to arouse still greater hostility to the custom among the English people, and there was formed a "Society for the Discouragement of Dueling." For the last half century public opinion in Great Britain has so strongly reprobated the custom that the practice, so far as encounters upon English soil are concerned, has practically come to an end.

CHAPTER XIX

DUELING—CONTINUED—NOTED AMERICAN DUELS

The practice of dueling has prevailed to a greater or less extent in every country of Europe. "Trial by battel" was introduced into Scotland about the beginning of the twelfth century, and was not entirely superseded by other legal methods for settling disputes until five hundred years had elapsed. For a time it was strictly confined to legitimate causes left to the courts for adjudication, but gradually it began to be adopted, usually with variations in which more deadly weapons were employed, for the settlement of private quarrels. As duels increased in frequency, laws were enacted looking to their suppression. Mild legislation proving ineffectual, more stringent laws were passed, notably one mentioned in the preceding chapter. This statute provided the punishment of death for those who participated in such an encounter, even though no injury resulted. This law considerably checked dueling in Scotland, but was far from stamping it out. In 1698 a law was enacted punishing the giving, sending or accepting of a challenge to fight a mortal combat, with banishment, and this applied even if no meeting took place. In addition, all the movable property of the offender was forfeited to the crown. Stringent as the enactments were, they failed to suppress dueling, which continued, with diminishing frequency, down to recent times.

Sir Walter Scott, one of the most accurate of all Scotch authors, has described in his novel, "The Fair Maid of Perth," a duel which, though mainly fictitious, none the less clearly and accurately shows the clannish feeling and fighting qualities of the Scottish people. In 1396 a bitter feud raged between two Scottish clans, known respectively as Clan Chattan and

Clan Rae. At length it was determined that the matters in dispute should be submitted to the arbitrament of the sword, each side selecting thirty champions. The event aroused great interest throughout the kingdom, and upon the day fixed for the battle the king and his court, together with the nobility generally, assembled to view the conflict. It was found, when each side counted its band of chosen warriors, that only twenty-nine of the selected champions of Clan Chattan were present. It was proposed that the Clan Rae should withdraw one of its warriors in order that the number on both sides might be equal. Yet so indomitable was the spirit of these brave fellows that not one would consent to surrender the honor of appearing in the lists as champion of his clan. After some delay, a soldier, who belonged to neither of the hostile factions, was found who consented to supply the place of the missing man, and the battle proceeded. When it was over, all of the thirty representatives of the Clan Rae save one lay dead upon the field, while of those of the Clan Chattan, only ten, beside the volunteer, were left alive, and each of these was more or less seriously wounded. The sole survivor of the unfortunate thirty who had done such valiant battle in behalf of the Clan Rae, refusing to surrender, and at the same time being unwilling to continue so unequal a contest, threw himself into the river Tay and found safety in flight.

A very famous duel was fought in Scotland at an early day by Sir Evan Lochiel, chief of the famous Clan Cameron, and an English officer named Colonel Pellew. For two hours they fought furiously and incessantly, when the English officer was disarmed. Dropping his own sword, Lochiel clinched with his antagonist, and for half an hour the two wrestled. At last they fell, the Scottish chief being underneath. Although the smaller and weaker of the two, Sir Evan managed to fasten his teeth upon the throat of his adversary and to tear away considerable quantities of flesh, which he still retained in his mouth when carried off the field. To such brutish barbarity dueling can reduce a naturally brave and humane man.

"Trial by battel" was introduced into Ireland about the time it was adopted in Scotland, and for a time was confined

to its legitimate judicial domain. Some of the judicial combats which took place even at a comparatively late day were remarkable no less for their sanguinary character than for their attendant circumstances of brutality. One of the most noted of these was a combat which occurred in 1538 between two determined Celts, who rejoiced in the somewhat striking names of Connor McCormack O'Connor, and Teig McGilpatrick O'Connor. The former was several times severely wounded and finally killed. The duel was fought within the walls of Dublin Castle, in the presence of the Lord Justices of Ireland and the members of the Irish Privy Council. The head of the dead man was severed from his body and laid before the members of the Judiciary by the victorious Teig.

Of an impetuous, not to say quarrelsome, disposition, the people of Ireland took very kindly to the new institution, and soon began to settle their own private disputes by means of personal encounters, and dueling speedily became the decided fashion. The rise of the duel was much more rapid in Ireland than in Scotland, and was sustained after it had been almost entirely discontinued in the latter country, and also after it had practically disappeared from England. The reason of this may be found in the fact that the people, particularly those of the better class, were far from disapproving of the practice. During the last days when an Irish Parliament sat in College Green, Dublin, duels were of frequent occurrence. Nor were they confined to the young and hot-headed representatives of the impulsive Celts; many of the leading men of the country, often those connected with the government, exchanging shots upon the dueling ground. Such statesmen as O'Connel, Curran, Gratton, Sheridan, and numerous others, regarded the sending of a challenge to mortal combat as one of the most natural and commendable acts of life. More than that, they looked upon one who declined to accept a challenge as a coward and poltroon. There were few Irishmen of any public prominence during the latter part of the last century who had not, at some period of his career, "fought his man." With such examples before them, it is not to be wondered that the young men of Ireland, particularly those of the upper

classes, generally and almost eagerly fell into the practice which had the favor of those whom they regarded as the foremost men on earth. Despite this education, which amounted almost to second nature, it appears that at the period under discussion the fighting of a duel was not regarded as a reason for future enmity between the participants therein. Indeed, a crossing of swords or an exchange of shots frequently wiped out all past ill feelings and made devoted friends of the late combatants.

Of all the counties of Ireland, those of Tipperary and Galway acquired and maintained the highest reputation for the prevalence of dueling among nearly all classes of people. The former county was especially noted for the number of its excellent swordsmen, while the people of Galway were no less famous for their proficiency in the use of the pistol. The inhabitants of counties Roscommon and Sligo also enjoyed the reputation of being excellent shots, and were by no means averse to the demonstration of their skill in personal encounters, which were often brought about through the most trivial causes. In County Mayo the sword and the pistol were alike favorite weapons among duelists, the prevalent sentiment appearing to have been that provided it were possible to have a fight, it made little difference what engine of destruction was selected.

In a word, during the period under consideration dueling was so popular in Ireland that not the slightest effort looking toward its repression was put forth by either Parliament or the courts; legislators and judges being alike ready to resort to the practice upon any and very nearly all occasions.

The stringent laws of Great Britain, which, after the union, applied to Ireland, speedily had the effect of discouraging the practice of dueling, which is now practically unknown in that country. That personal encounters are still common in Ireland is true, but they do not occur by appointment, which is the initial step in what is properly termed a duel.

Although dueling probably originated among the Germanic people, it never became as prevalent there as in France, and some other countries of Europe. Joseph II., who became

Emperor of Germany in 1765, having previously been king of Rome, took a decided stand against the practice, which was quite frequent in his day, particularly among military men. "The custom is detestable," declared this monarch, "and shall not be permitted to thrive in my army. I despise men who send and accept challenges to meet each other in mortal combat. Such men are, in my estimation, more despicable, by far, than were the Roman gladiators."

The pronounced position of the Emperor Joseph seems to have had much to do with checking dueling in Germany, which, since his day, has never assumed the proportions of ancient times. As a matter of fact, the German is but little addicted to quarreling. The Teutonic disposition is generally regarded as decidedly phlegmatic; and the average German, while standing for his own rights, is careful to observe the rights of others, and is far more scrupulous in the matter of inflicting a wrong upon another than in resenting an affront offered to himself. At the same time, no one doubts the courage of the Germans, which has been demonstrated on too many hard-fought battle-fields to admit of question. It is generally supposed that the students of the modern German universities are greatly addicted to dueling. That actual encounters sometimes occur between them is undoubtedly true, yet by far the greater proportion of those reported are nothing more than fencing-bouts with sharp weapons. They may be termed foolish, but can hardly be called deadly affairs, since the seconds, who are always armed as well as the principals, usually interfere to prevent serious bloodshed. A large number of this class of duels are annually fought in Germany.

There are not wanting writers who do not hesitate to assert that with the advent of the Second Empire in France, which they allege to have been in all essential respects a hollow mockery and an empty sham, came the inauguration of a laxity of morals, which in some of its aspects was hardly equaled during the reign of the most dissolute of the sovereigns of the House of Bourbon. Without conceding or denying the justice of this criticism, it is possible to say, without fear of successful contradiction, that within the last half cen-

tury a species of dueling has arisen in France which is as contrary to the dictates of ordinary morality as it is far removed from inducing the personal danger which attends similar combats in almost every other country. The politician, journalist, man about town, and, in fact, nearly every one in the French capital, rather prides himself upon sending a challenge for causes which either the Teutonic or Anglo-Saxon races would regard as utterly insufficient. Fortunately for the quick-witted, hot-headed Frenchmen, the customs of his country afford him an opportunity for the vindication of his "honor" without the incurring of any special personal risk. Among men who, while deprecating the custom, would engage in personal combat only when they expected to give or receive a mortal wound, modern French duels provoke ridicule and, in many cases, excite contempt. The principals meet; the utmost niceties of "The Code" are observed; two or three harmless lunges with a sword are exchanged; no one receives a scratch; but offended Gallic honor is thoroughly satisfied. Whatever may be thought or said by way of justification or condemnation of the custom of dueling, the modern French duel cannot be regarded in any other light than as a travesty upon manly courage and an insult to human intelligence.

Some French duelists of modern times have appeared upon the field so often that their names have become as familiar in the United States as in France. Perhaps the most noted of these are the famous Paul de Cassagnac and Henri Rochefort. Dr. Clemenceau has also achieved an unenviable distinction on the same line. He is equally expert with the pistol and the sword, and few men care to face him in an encounter of this character. Indeed, it is said in France that to meet either Clemenceau or De Cassagnac is to insure a passport to the hospital and possibly to the grave. Rochefort is also a capital shot, yet he once showed his fear of meeting De Cassagnac, declining to accept the latter's challenge except upon the terms that they should fight with loaded pistols, breast to breast. De Cassagnac declared that such a stipulation amounted to a positive invitation to commit both suicide and

murder, and refused to entertain it. These men, with a few others, furnish exceptions to the rule now generally prevalent in France that dueling is merely a pleasant and harmless pastime.

Some early travelers among North American Indian tribes of the far west, describe a mode of dueling as prevalent among them which was certainly peculiarly their own. When it was determined between two adversaries that a duel was unavoidable, the unwritten law of the tribe required that both combatants should meet death. The party receiving the challenge appeared upon the field unarmed, and was speedily dispatched by his antagonist. The latter, while his enemy was still weltering in blood, was expected to present his own weapon to some relative or friend of the dying man, and calmly await the mortal wound which was certain to be given.

While personal encounters are common among the hot-headed Mexicans, the duel, in the sense in which that word is usually understood, is comparatively infrequent. The Mexican is quick alike in perceiving and in resenting an affront, but an encounter usually follows the giving of an insult immediately, and upon the very spot where it was received. A common mode of challenging is for the party who considers himself aggrieved, either to throw his glove in his adversary's face, or to wave it before him. This is well understood to be a challenge to a fight, and is never declined, unless by a self-confessed coward, which is a rare commodity in that country. The challenging party commonly has either his pistol or his knife drawn at the time, and his antagonist is not always fortunate enough to be able to produce his own weapon in self-defense. The knife is much favored by the Mexicans, particularly among those in the country districts. Fights of this character are of common occurrence at weddings, and it is not infrequently the case that the groom, and sometimes the bride even, is killed. Friends of the two men between whom the first quarrel originated, espouse the side of one or the other of the antagonists and a general fight ensues, in which it often happens that many of the guests are killed by random

shots. When a duel, as such, is fought, the details are arranged between friends of the contending parties, one principal never sending a challenge directly to the other. The locality most favored is a dark room, whither the two enemies repair, neither accompanied by a friend, and fight, usually to the death, with knives. Indeed, when the door is opened it is often found that two dead bodies are lying upon the floor. This description of dueling is especially common in Yucatan. The deadliness of the passions of the antagonists may be inferred from the fact that it is the custom to keep the door of the room tightly closed until absolute silence reigns within.

Another form of dueling to which Mexicans and South Americans frequently resort, takes place on horseback. These encounters generally occur upon the pampas or plains. Two lines are marked out upon the ground at a stipulated distance, and one horseman takes up his location at each. Urging their animals to full speed they ride past each other, each thrusting at his antagonist with his sword as he goes by. No sooner have the riders reached each the line at which his opponent had been posted than he wheels about, and, again riding at full speed, makes another lunge at his adversary as he goes by. This is continued until one of the duelists is unhorsed.

Dueling never prevailed to any considerable extent in the United States, or in the English Colonies before the Revolution, and this should be regarded by all true Americans as highly complimentary to the nation, and to the character of the people, whose enlightened public sentiment and ideas touching the sanctity of human life, have caused the practice to fall into absolute disrepute. To send a challenge to mortal combat to-day, unless in some rude portion of the far west, where border manners prevail and local government is weak, would cause the sender to be either despised or ridiculed, frequently both. Those who have suffered grievances of a substantial nature have ample redress at the hands of the law, to which they are not slow in appealing. Thus the practice of dueling, which originated in one of the forms of trial provided by the law, has with us given place to the law itself, whose improved methods usually provide substantial justice and leave

no excuse for an injured man to make himself his own judge, jury and executioner.

Americans, as a rule, are high-spirited, and not in the least wanting in courage. Personal insults are resented, but not after the rules of the "Code." Sometimes shooting affrays follow altercations, but more frequently the difficulty is settled by an appeal to those weapons with which every man has been provided by nature.

So far as dueling ever prevailed in this country, it was ever much more affected in the South than in the North. In the former section, the old "cavalier" spirit has always largely existed and the word "honor" given a meaning that never obtained among the Puritans of New England and their western descendants. The existence in the South of an aristocracy founded principally upon wealth—particularly broad estates—and the presence of an enslaved race, are doubtless the leading causes of this distinction. Happily for the country, this difference has now well-nigh disappeared; and the people of our republic are substantially one common brotherhood. At the present time, dueling is almost unknown in the South, popular sentiment being nearly as strong against it there as in the North.

Not only do statutes of the national government prohibit and severely punish dueling, but every State in the Union has provided severe penalties for engaging in the practice, the offense being made a felony. In many States the sending or carrying of a challenge to mortal combat is made an offense punished by severe penalties. In every State, the killing of a man in a duel is treated as murder, or at least manslaughter. The respect that Americans entertain for the laws of their own making has no doubt much to do with the almost universal contempt for the duelist. At the same time, laws are the result of public sentiment, and those against this barbarous practice had their origin in the good sense and good morals of those who founded our Republic.

The circumstance that dueling never prevailed in this country to the extent that it did in Europe, is due primarily to the fact that the practice was greatly discouraged in the old

world before any considerable settlements were made here. But during the latter part of the eighteenth century, when duels were common in England, they were far from being unknown in the United States, although, except in the Southern States, they were never upheld by public sentiment. Few encounters of this character between men of great prominence have occurred here. The most noted one was that between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, which occurred July 11, 1804. The death of General Hamilton plunged the nation into grief, and created a sensation that has seldom been equaled in this country.

Both Hamilton and Burr had a prominent part in the building of our Republic, and both at an early day became important factors in the political history of the nation. As early as 1790 a decided political rivalry existed between the two statesmen, Hamilton being prominent in the party known as the Federalists, while Burr became one of the leaders of the Republican—now the Democrat—party. Although a young man, Hamilton was the intimate friend of Washington, while Burr was closely associated with Thomas Jefferson. Both aspired to become President of the Republic. Upon more than one occasion Hamilton had reflected upon the character of Burr, writing, as early as 1792: "In a word, we have an embryo Cæsar in the United States, 'tis Burr." At length, Hamilton declared in the presence of Dr. Charles D. Cooper, a personal friend of Burr, that he "looked upon Mr. Burr as a dangerous man, and one who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government."

On June 18, 1804, Aaron Burr sent to General Hamilton an open letter from Dr. Cooper, which, he said, advised him that Hamilton had made some statements reflecting upon his honor, and insisting that the latter either withdraw the same, or acknowledge the correctness of Cooper's statement. This communication from Burr was delivered to General Hamilton by Mr. W. P. Van Ness, who evidently regarded himself as being either a present or prospective bearer of a challenge.

Hamilton's antipathy to dueling was well known and had been frequently expressed, yet his courage was undoubted.

Not wishing to engage in a personal encounter if the same could be avoided, he requested the privilege of being permitted one or two days' time in which to reflect upon the contents and tenor of Colonel Burr's communication. This was granted, and on June 20th, he addressed to Burr a communication which, in its happy blending of courage with discretion, no less than in the expression of manifest willingness on the part of its author to explain any cause of misunderstanding, absolutely denied the right of his political opponent to accept as correct an inferential interpretation of anything he might have said in the course of private conversation, stands out as a masterpiece of epistolary skill and as a thorough exposition of the principles which might have been presumed to have actuated such a man under such circumstances.

One paragraph from this celebrated letter is well worth quoting. General Hamilton says: "I cannot reconcile it with propriety to make the acknowledgment or denial you desire. Yet I will add that I deem it inadmissible, on principle, to consent to be interrogated as to the justness of the inferences which may be drawn by others from whatever I may have said of a political opponent, in the course of fifteen years' competition. If there were no other objection, this would be sufficient, that it would tend to expose my sincerity and delicacy to injurious implication from any person who may at any time have conceived the import of my expressions differently from what I may have intended or may afterwards recollect. . . More than this cannot fitly be expected from me; and especially it cannot be reasonably expected that I shall enter into an explanation upon a basis so vague as that which you have adopted. I trust, on more reflection, you will see the matter in the same light with me. If not, I can only regret the circumstance and abide the consequence."

On the day following the date of General Hamilton's reply to his first communication, Burr sent a second letter, satirical in its language and undoubtedly intended to be particularly aggravating in tone. He regretted "to find in it" (Hamilton's letter) "nothing of that sincerity and delicacy which you" (Hamilton) "professed to value." He followed this sneer with

a taunt even yet more exasperating. "Political opposition," he wrote, "can never absolve gentlemen from the necessity for a rigid adherence to the laws of honor and the rules of decorum. I neither claim such privilege nor indulge it in others."

This stinging letter produced upon General Hamilton the effect which its writer had desired and expected, and on the following day he consulted Mr. Nathaniel Pendleton, whose services as a second he had determined to request should a meeting with Burr prove unavoidable.

As a result of the conference between Hamilton and Pendleton, a communication was sent by the latter to Mr. Van Ness advising the latter gentleman, in his capacity as the proposed second of Burr, that it was impossible for General Hamilton to enter into further correspondence unless Burr would withdraw his last letter, and write one which would admit of an amicable reply. Van Ness, acting for his principal, declined to withdraw the letter, which General Hamilton regarded as particularly offensive, and a very brief correspondence ensued.

By way of emphasizing Hamilton's aversion to enter into a controversy with Burr, such as that on which the latter seemed determined to insist, the following letter, written by the former under date of June 22, 1804, and placed in the hands of Mr. Pendleton, should be cited:

"Sir:—Your first letter, in its style too peremptory, made a demand, in my opinion, unprecedented and unwarrantable. My answer, pointing out the embarrassment, gave you an opportunity to take a less objectionable course. You have not chosen to do it; but by your last letter, received this day, containing expressions indecorous and improper, you have increased the difficulties to an explanation intrinsically to the nature of your application.

"If by a definite reply you mean the direct avowal or disavowal required of in your first letter, I have no other answer to give than that which has already been given. If you mean anything different, admitting of greater latitude, it is requisite you should explain."

This letter was held back by Pendleton for four days, in

hopes that a hostile encounter might yet be averted. So determined, however, was Colonel Burr and his second, Mr. Van Ness, upon forcing a duel, that all efforts looking toward an amicable settlement finally fell through, and General Hamilton consented to meet Mr. Burr, because he believed that, should he fail to do so, a mistaken public opinion would impeach his bravery as a soldier and his honor as a gentleman. After some delay, due to General Hamilton's request that he might be accorded time in which to attend to certain cases pending in the United States Circuit Court, in which he appeared as counsel, the two men met on July 11, 1804. The locality chosen was a spot upon the New Jersey shore, on the west bank of the Hudson, where now stands the little city of Weehawken. The hour named was seven o'clock in the morning. The details of the duel, as furnished by the seconds, Messrs. Van Ness and Pendleton, are as follows:

"Colonel Burr arrived first on the ground, as had been previously agreed. When General Hamilton arrived the parties exchanged salutations, and the seconds proceeded to make their arrangements. They measured the distance, ten full paces, and cast lots for the choice of position, as also to determine by whom the word should be given, both of which fell to the second of General Hamilton. They then proceeded to load the pistols in each other's presence, after which the parties took up their stations. The gentleman who was to give the word then explained to the parties the rules which were to govern them in firing, which were as follows: The parties being placed at their stations, the second who gives the word shall ask them whether they are ready; being answered in the affirmative, he shall say, 'One, two, three, fire,' and he shall then fire or lose his fire. He then asked if they were prepared; being answered in the affirmative, he gave the word 'present,' as had been agreed upon, and both parties presented and fired in succession—the intervening time is not expressed, as the seconds do not precisely agree on that point. The fire of Colonel Burr took effect, and General Hamilton almost instantly fell. Colonel Burr then advanced toward General Hamilton, with a manner and gesture that

appeared to General Hamilton's friend to be expressive of regret, but without speaking turned about and withdrew, being urged from the field by his friends, with a view to prevent his being recognized by the surgeons and bargemen, who were than approaching. No further communication took place between the principals, and the barge that carried Colonel Burr immediately returned to the city. We conceive it proper to add that the conduct of the parties in this interview was perfectly proper as suited the occasion."

General Hamilton was shot in the right side. He expired about two o'clock on the following morning. He recovered consciousness before his death and expressed his strong love for his wife and children and his abiding faith in the Christian religion. By a curious coincidence, Alexander Hamilton's eldest son, Philip Hamilton, was killed in a duel at Weehawken, not far from the spot where his father afterwards fell, January 10, 1802. General Hamilton learned of the place of meeting and hastened forward to prevent it, but fainted on the way. Hamilton's antagonist was G. J. Baker, who was the challenged party. Mrs. Alexander Hamilton survived her husband half a century, dying in New York in 1854, at the advanced age of ninety-seven years.

The second most noted duel ever fought in America was between two famous naval officers, Commodore Stephen A. Decatur and James Barron. The meeting took place March 22, 1820, at Bladensburg, Md., and resulted in the death of Commodore Decatur. The circumstances which led up to this unfortunate affair are of sufficient interest to be briefly stated in this connection. Commodore Decatur, while yet a captain in the navy, had served under Barron, who was at that time himself a commodore. In 1807, while the commodore's flagship, the Chesapeake, was lying in the harbor of Norfolk, Va., several desertions from British men-of-war occurred, the deserters enlisting as marines for service upon the Chesapeake, for which service recruits were then being secured. The British commander requested that these deserters, being British subjects, should be surrendered to the representatives of his Majesty's government. The request not being com-

plied with, the English Minister at Washington made a formal demand upon the American government of a like character. The authorities at Washington declined to accede to the request, and while the matter was in this position, the Chesapeake put out to sea, with the deserters on board. Thereupon the British government directed Captain Humphreys of the frigate Leonard to follow the American vessel and take these men by force if necessary. These orders were literally obeyed. The Leonard overtook the Chesapeake, hailed her, and sent a boat alongside in command of a lieutenant. The latter officer was received on board the Chesapeake by Commodore Barron, and proceeded to state to the American officer the nature of the instructions given Captain Humphreys, adding that the latter had no discretion in the premises, and should consider himself bound to obey these orders unless the men in question were given up. To this Barron replied that there were no British deserters on board his vessel. The Englishman thereupon withdrew and returned to his vessel. The Leonard at once drew up alongside the Chesapeake and reiterated the demand already made in a more forcible manner. Receiving no reply, she opened fire upon the American man-of-war, and the Commander of the Chesapeake struck his colors without firing a gun. A crew from the Leonard boarded the Chesapeake and took from her four of the English deserters, together with an American sailor.

As a matter of course, this affair led to an investigation into Commodore Barron's conduct in the premises. A court-martial was ordered, which sentenced Barron to suspension, although giving him the pay which the regulations of the service allotted to officers in his situation.

Twelve years later the suspended officer applied for reinstatement to his former rank, together with assignment to active service at full pay. He alleged that the findings of the court-martial, although reviewed and approved by the President, had been grossly unjust. The application was referred to Commodore Decatur, who had succeeded the applicant as Senior Commodore in the American navy. Decatur unhesitatingly expressed the opinion that the application ought to be

denied; and while disclaiming any sentiment of personal animosity toward Barron, frankly said that, in his opinion, the conduct of the latter since his suspension had been such as to forever disqualify him for reinstatement.

This action on the part of Commodore Decatur led to a lengthy correspondence between Barron and himself, which extended over several months, and in the course of which criminations and recriminations were freely exchanged. The final result was the sending of a challenge to Decatur by Barron. The meeting was arranged, as has been stated, for March 22, 1820, the weapons selected by the challenged party being pistols. Decatur was accompanied to the field by a surgeon and by his second, Commodore Bainbridge. Commodore Barron's second was Captain Elliot, and he also had a surgeon in his party. The preliminaries having been arranged, the fatal signal was given. Both men had grown familiar with the use of the chosen weapon in the service of their country, and both were expert marksmen. At the word of command, they fired simultaneously, the ball from the pistol of each penetrating the body of the other at nearly the same spot, and at the same instant. Both fell, one mortally, the other severely injured. Decatur had received his death wound. He was removed to his house in Washington, where he soon afterwards expired, his last intelligible words being a condemnation of dueling and the duelist.

Although Commodore Decatur deprecated the practice of dueling upon his deathbed, the affair which cost him his life was the fourth of the kind in which he had been engaged. In 1799, upon the advice of his father, he challenged an officer of an Indian ship, lying at Philadelphia. The meeting took place near New Castle, Delaware. Decatur wounded his antagonist in the hip, but escaped uninjured himself. In 1801, while on service in the Mediterranean, he challenged one of the officers of a Spanish ship. This matter was arranged without a "meeting." In 1803 he served as second for Midshipman Joseph Bainbridge in an encounter with one Cochran, the English Secretary at Malta. Knowing his principal to be a poor marksman, Decatur insisted that they should fire at four

paces; as a result the Englishman was killed, while Bainbridge escaped uninjured.

The duel that may be reckoned third among American encounters, from the standpoint of the prominence of the principals, took place February 24, 1838, in Maryland, not far from the national capital. Both of the contestants were members of Congress, one being the Hon, Jonathan Cilley of Maine, the other the Hon. William J. Graves of Kentucky. Major Ben Perley Poore, whose reminiscences of public men are well known to most readers, has written the following succinct account of this famous and most unnecessary encounter:

"Mr. Cilley, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, criticised a charge of corruption brought against some unmarried congressmen in a letter published in the New York *Courier and Enquirer*, over the signature of 'A Spy in Washington,' and indorsed in the editorial columns of that paper. Mr. James Watson Webb, the editor of the *Courier and Enquirer*, immediately visited Washington, and sent a challenge to Mr. Cilley by Mr. Graves, with whom he had but a slight acquaintance. Mr. Cilley declined to receive the hostile communication from Mr. Graves, without making any reflection on the personal character of Mr. Webb. Mr. Graves felt himself bound by the unwritten code of honor to espouse the cause of Mr. Webb, and challenged Mr. Cilley himself. The challenge was accepted, and the preliminaries were arranged between Mr. Henry A. Wise, as the second of Mr. Graves, and Mr. George W. Jones as the second of Mr. Cilley. Rifles were selected as the weapons, and Mr. Graves found difficulty in obtaining one, but was finally supplied by his friend Mr. Rives, of the *Globe*. The parties met, the ground was measured, and the combatants were placed. On the third fire Mr. Cilley fell, shot through the body, and died almost instantly. Mr. Graves, on seeing his antagonist fall, expressed a desire to render him some assistance, but was told by Mr. Jones, 'My friend is dead, sir!' Mr. Cilley, who left a wife and three young children, was a popular favorite, and his tragic end caused great excitement all over the country. Mr. Webb was generally blamed for having instigated the fatal

encounter; certainly, he did not endeavor to prevent it. Mr. Graves was never afterward re-elected—indeed, no man who has killed another in a duel has ever been elected to office in Kentucky."

A committee was appointed by the House of Representatives to investigate the matter, and on April 25th they made a full report, severely denouncing Mr. Graves for the course he had pursued, and recommending that he be expelled from the House, but leaving Webb, the real instigator of the whole difficulty, to the laws of the country and the effect of public opinion, in the concluding paragraph, which is as follows:

"The committee entertain no doubt that James Watson Webb has been guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House; but they concur unanimously in the opinion that if there be any real ground to believe that a conspiracy to assassinate actually existed, as set forth in that atrocious paper drawn up by him, signed by Daniel Jackson and William H. Morell, sworn to by the latter, and published in the New York *Courier and Enquirer*, he be left to the chastisement of the course of law and of public opinion, and that the House will consult its own dignity and the public interest by bestowing upon him no further notice."

Among the numerous duels that occurred in this country during the early portion of the present century may be mentioned the fatal meeting between General Andrew Jackson and Charles Dickinson, which took place May 30, 1806, near Adairville, Tennessee. This may be called one of the most noteworthy occurrences of the kind in the history of the country, both by reason of the distinguished character of the combatants and the circumstance that they were "crack shots," and each very desirous of taking the other's life.

If the sending of a challenge to engage in a combat to the death were ever justifiable, General Jackson was excusable for his action. Dickinson had cast serious reflections upon the character of Mrs. Jackson, and the fighting spirit of "Old Hickory," which manifested itself later at the battle of New Orleans, was thoroughly aroused. Both men were terribly in earnest, and both were as cool and collected as if bound on the

most pacific errand. On the way to the rendezvous, it is said that Dickinson amused his friends by showing his expertness with a pistol, putting four bullets into a space that could be covered with a silver dollar, at a distance of twenty-four feet. It is related that, having severed a cord with a pistol-shot, near the tavern where the party had stopped for refreshments, he said to the landlord, as he rode away: "If General Jackson comes along this way, be kind enough to show him that."

The duel took place in the morning, and was fought with pistols. The weapons were to be held downward until the word was given, after which the combatants were to fire as soon as they pleased. Dickinson first fired. Jackson raised his left arm and held it tightly across his chest. Seeing that the general was not disabled, Dickinson cried out: "Great God! Have I missed him?" General Jackson attempted to return the fire, but the weapon stopped at half-cock. Recocking the pistol, he fired upon the now defenseless man, shooting him through the body below the ribs. He died about nine o'clock that evening. Dickinson's bullet had struck Jackson in the breast, breaking two of his ribs, but not inflicting a dangerous wound. After the affair was over, the general said to his second that he would have lived long enough to kill that traducer of his wife even if he had been shot through the heart.

The same political dispute that led to the fatal duel between Burr and Hamilton led to a meeting between Honorable DeWitt Clinton and Honorable John Swartwout, which took place near the city of New York. Five shots were exchanged, the fourth and fifth wounding Mr. Swartwout; after which his opponent declined either to apologize or continue the fight.

A most noted duel was fought near San Francisco, September 13, 1859, between two famous Californians—Honorable David C. Broderick, United States senator, and the Honorable David S. Terry, ex-chief-justice of the State. Like Burr and Hamilton, Terry and Broderick were bitter political opponents. They were both Democrats, but leaders of opposing wings of that then dominant party. The immediate cause of the duel was a speech made by Judge Terry in Sacramento, in

which he called Broderick an arch-traitor. The meeting was arranged for the 12th of September, at sunrise. The principals and their seconds were arrested on the ground, but were subsequently discharged, as no actual misdemeanor had been committed. The meeting was then arranged for the next morning at a place some ten miles from San Francisco. The arrangement had gained some publicity, and about eighty spectators were present. At the first exchange of shots, Broderick fell, mortally wounded. He lingered in great pain until September 16th, when he died. His death plunged California into mourning. No duel on the Pacific coast has ever attracted the attention or raised the animosities that this one did.

As already suggested, dueling has fallen into general neglect and disgrace in this country, and the sender of a challenge is either ridiculed or despised—frequently both. Better methods and manners have gained the ascendency with us, and a return to "the code" cannot be expected. The custom was long defended and justified, but a more enlightened sentiment has at last prevailed, and the taking of human life under the forms of the unwritten laws of society no longer generally prevails, except in the most barbarous countries.

CHAPTER XX

THE CRONIN CASE

The entire annals of crime scarcely present a darker page than that devoted to the "Cronin Case." Although nearly a decade has elapsed since its commission, this awful murder is still vividly remembered by thousands, and it will never be forgotten as long as crime flourishes and continues to wield its weird fascination over the minds and hearts of men.

A stranger case has never presented itself. The motives were evidently complex; revenge, perverted patriotism, the obligations of a secret oath, cupidity, the determination to prevent disastrous disclosures—all these considerations were apparently present, and all were, seemingly, utilized to impel forward those who laid the dark plans and to nerve the hands of the heartless, unfeeling wretches who carried them into execution.

The domain of fiction presents no stranger plot, no more deliberate and artificial plan for taking the life of a human being than appears in this celebrated case.

The killing of a law-abiding and respected citizen always excites horror and detestation, but the dark mystery that for a time hung over this awful murder, the unusual motives for its commission, and the despicable efforts made to blacken the memory of the dead man, aroused the liveliest interest, the most intense indignation. Involving, as it did in a manner, the organized movement for the amelioration of the people of Ireland, the crime became at once an international affair; its details were printed in every civilized language on earth and eagerly read by the peoples of all nations.

The "Cronin Case" will doubtless long maintain the position it has taken at the head of the class of crimes within

which it falls, since perverted ingenuity and lack of human conscience can scarcely induce man to go beyond it.

Philip Patrick Henry Cronin was born at Cork, Ireland, in 1846, being the youngest of fifteen children, and when seven months old was brought to New York City by his parents. His father, John Gregg Cronin, removed to St. Catharines, Ontario, about 1856, taking Patrick, as he was commonly known, with him to Canada, where he received a very good education. About 1864 he left St. Catharines and took up his abode in Oil City, Pa., where he lived eighteen months, dividing the time between working in a drug store and teaching school. Leaving Oil City, he spent some time at Clearfield, Pa., and then, about 1868, removed to St. Louis, where he secured a position as a shipping clerk.

But young Cronin was a man of decided ability, and had no mind to spend his life in commercial pursuits. He became a passenger agent for the St. Louis & Southwestern Railroad, and devoted his leisure time to the study of medicine, reading law also in connection with his medical studies. In 1878, when thirty-two years of age, he graduated in medicine from the Missouri Medical College, McDowell University. That same year he went to the Paris Exposition as commissioner for the State of Missouri.

Returning to St. Louis, Dr. Cronin began the practice of his chosen profession, for which his diligent studies and some seven years' practical experience as a druggist had admirably qualified him. In 1882, Dr. Cronin removed to Chicago, where he speedily acquired a fine medical practice. He was never married, and made his home while in Chicago with T. T. Conklin, a liquor dealer who resided at 468 North Clark street, and whose acquaintance he had formed in St. Louis.

Though reared in America, Dr. Cronin never forgot the land of his birth. He sympathized strongly with Ireland, and early identified himself with various movements looking to the relief of his distressed countrymen. Physically and mentally, he was a strong man, and carried into Irish affairs the earnestness and rugged honesty which characterized his private and professional life. A prominent member of the Irish Nationalist

party, he was ever watching for fraud and malfeasance. He was persistent, combative, even, in his integrity; he knew nothing of policy where honesty was concerned, and freely denounced fraud and double-dealing whenever and wherever they presented themselves.

Such a man could not choose but make enemies, any more than he could avoid making fast and devoted friends among those who shared his feelings and aspirations and endorsed his methods for honestly administering Irish-American affairs. Dr. Cronin was a prominent member of the great Irish society known as the Clan-na-Gael, being for some years the Senior Guardian of a Chicago camp. At the time of his arrival from St. Louis the affairs of the organization were virtually in the control of three men, called the "Triangle," of whom Alexander Sullivan was the recognized head. So secret were the affairs of this society kept that very few of its members even knew the identity of the national treasurer.

Under such a state of affairs, fraud, plain theft, was a matter easy to compass and tolerably secure from detection. Large sums of money were being constantly collected for the cause of Ireland, and the disbursements being usually secretly and confidentially made, no system of auditing was possible, so far as the ordinary members were concerned. Dr. Cronin finally discovered, as he claimed, a very serious shortage in the funds of the organization. He made formal charges and pressed them with persistence, bitterness even, being a most earnest and aggressive man.

This led to a break in the Clan-na-Gael, and the formation of a rival society, which was followed by the expulsion of the doctor, who could not be induced to make any sort of compromise with those whom he believed to be fattening on the proceeds of collections made for the relief and freedom of Ireland. In 1888 there was a reorganization and a reunion of the Clan-na-Gael, but Cronin, instead of returning to the fold, continued to make inquiries and press investigations of a character most damaging to the "Triangle" and its adherents. He was denounced by several camps, and, still persisting in his investigations, his death seemed the only

thing calculated to insure the safety of the parties most vitally interested.

Shortly before eight o'clock on the evening of Saturday, May 4, 1889, a top-buggy drawn by a white horse stopped before No. 468 North Clark street, the residence of T. T. Conklin. A young man alighted and inquired for Dr. Cronin, stating that his services were required by Patrick O'Sullivan, an iceman of Lake View, several miles north. He presented one of the iceman's cards, and stated that a man in his employ had been very badly injured, and required the immediate attendance of a surgeon. Waiting only to secure his surgical instruments, the doctor entered the buggy with the young man and was driven rapidly away to the northward. He was never again seen alive by any of his friends.

Dr. Cronin was very regular in his habits, and when he did not return during the night, Mrs. Conklin became very much alarmed. During all the years that he had made his home with the Conklins he had never been so long absent from home without notifying her of the cause. She also knew of the feud with the Clan-na-Gael, and the doctor had confidentially informed her that he feared an effort might, at any time, be made upon his life.

On Sunday morning the absence of the doctor was communicated to the police, and the matter was at once connected with a circumstance reported by two police officers—Smith and Hayden—in Lake View. About two o'clock that morning the officers saw a wagon, containing two men and a large trunk, being driven very rapidly to the northward. Officer Smith attempted to stop the wagon, but the driver did not heed his command. About an hour and a half later the officers saw the men driving south in the same wagon, which no longer contained the trunk. They did not hail the men this time, thinking the matter not very unusual.

About half-past seven on the morning of that day a large trunk was found in a ditch on Evanston Avenue, some distance north of the point where the officers had seen the wagon. It was a cheap affair, and when opened was found to contain a quantity of absorbent cotton largely saturated with blood,

the interior of the trunk being spotted with gore. A bunch of human hair was also discovered.

Captain Villiers, of the Lake View police-station, speedily satisfied himself that the trunk had very recently contained a human body, and decided that a foul murder had been committed. Learning that Dr. Cronin had been missing since the preceding night, he at once advanced the theory, subsequently shown to be correct, that the doctor had been murdered, and his body carried away in the trunk.

On Sunday, May 5th, Patrick O'Sullivan, the iceman, whose card had been presented to Dr. Cronin the preceding evening, stated to some newspaper reporters that he had not sent for the doctor; that he had only four men in his employ, and that none of them had been injured. He knew absolutely nothing about the matter, though he had some acquaintance with Dr. Cronin. O'Sullivan sustained a good reputation, and not a shadow of suspicion fell upon him at this time.

Dr. Cronin had hosts of friends in Chicago, many of whom were identified with the Irish movement, and hence were in possession of certain inside facts as to the motives that might well have led to his assassination. These men at once decided that the doctor had been the victim of foul play, and never wavered in this opinion or relaxed their efforts to find his body. They knew the nature and desperate situation of his enemies, and subsequent developments quite justified their seemingly hard conclusions. In the meantime, the country in the section where the trunk had been found was diligently searched. Ditches were dragged, bushes scrutinized, manholes in sewers opened, the surface of the ground, much of which was unbroken prairie, carefully searched for evidences of a masked grave. The shore of the lake was explored for miles for traces of the missing man.

But the enemies of Cronin were scarcely less active. The excitement was every day increasing and the columns of the newspapers were well filled with theories and speculations. The explanation most persistently advanced was that he had quietly departed for London to testify before the Parnell com-

mission, then in session there. "Prominent Nationalists," whose names were not given, certified that the much-sought-for man had been quite intimate with the spy and informer, LeCarron, while the latter was domiciled in Chicago. These insinuations were well calculated to deceive, since, like Cronin, LeCarron had long been recognized as a friend of Ireland—had not, indeed, been seriously suspected until he exposed his long career of duplicity by giving his testimony in London.

On May 10th, what were regarded as most important developments materialized in the case. A man giving the name of Frank Woodruff was arrested on the West Side, being in possession of a horse and wagon that seemed to have been stolen. The mention of the Cronin case appeared to greatly embarrass him, and he finally broke down and made what he called a full confession, acknowledging that he had driven the wagon that bore away the body of Dr. Cronin, and had dumped the blood-stained trunk into the ditch in Lake View.

Woodruff, or Black, as he called himself at times, proved a disturbing element in the investigation, throwing the officers off the scent. His stories, which he changed and modified from time to time, were of a most sensational character, but, as they finally came to nothing, may well be dismissed. Woodruff had been guilty of horse-stealing, and was doubtless trying to shield himself from the effects of the lesser crime by acknowledging complicity in the more heinous one, of which he had no fears of being convicted. For a long time he puzzled the police and authorities and an effort was finally made to connect him with the murder. He was indicted but never brought to trial.

The plan of the conspirators went much further than the murder of Dr. Cronin. The undoubted intention was to blacken his memory, to convince the world that he was a traitor to the Irish cause, a paid spy of the British government. The stories connecting the doctor with LeCarron were followed by claims that he was alive on the 10th and 11th of May. A newspaper correspondent in Toronto, Canada, sent in reports to the effect that he had seen and interviewed the

doctor in that city. He claimed to be bound for France, and stated that he had left Chicago because fearful that his life would be taken if he remained.

It seems more than likely that the reporter who sent this news to his paper was entirely honest, having been deceived by a plausible though false identification of a man sent to Toronto to impersonate the murdered physician.

The plan doubtless was to trace Dr. Cronin to London, show him to have been a traitor in the pay of England, and have his dead body found there and identified by articles which his enemies could readily produce for that purpose. Human depravity can hardly be made to go beyond this. Not content with taking the life of an upright, earnest, and entirely patriotic man, these miscreants aimed to brand him as a traitor, to call down upon his name and memory the execrations of the Irish race and the contempt of all right-minded men.

The reports that Dr. Cronin had been seen in Toronto and had departed for Europe, supported by the insinuation of his enemies that he was a traitor to the cause of Ireland, and had departed for the purpose of giving evidence in London, coupled with the lack of all success in unraveling the dark mystery, tended to discourage the police. A search was still maintained, but it was conducted in a half-hearted way, with small prospects or hopes of success. Suddenly, unexpectedly, a discovery was made that set at rest all doubts, silenced the calumnies and falsehoods of enemies, and aroused an excitement almost without precedent in Chicago, an excitement that took posesssion of the entire land, and, with the speed of the electric telegraph, encompassed the earth.

On May 22, 1889, the body of Dr. P. H. Cronin was found in a Lake View catch-basin. There were six deadly wounds upon his head, including three skull fractures. The evidences of his brutal murder were plain and unmistakable. When found the body was entirely naked. About the head was wrapped a towel, while an Agnus Dei, an emblem of Catholic devotion, hung around the neck.

The discovery was made about four o'clock in the afternoon

by three workmen who were engaged in cleaning sewers in that vicinity. The man-hole where it was discovered is located a little over half a mile, almost due north, of the place where the trunk was found. The body was removed to the Lake View police-station, where it was positively identified by John J. Cronin, a brother, T. T. Conklin and others. The fact of the discovery became speedily known in the city, and an almost unprecedented excitement followed.

The day after the finding of the murdered man's bloated remains a discovery of great importance was made. The newspapers had taken a lively interest in the case, and had spared no pains to unravel the mystery. Patrick O'Sullivan had fallen under some measure of suspicion, principally for the reason that he had, some time before, sought an introduction to Dr. Cronin for the purpose of employing him by the year to attend to any of his employés who might be injured in the discharge of their duties. O'Sullivan employed but three or four men, and such a contract was a very unusual one for a man of his class to make. This made him a subject for investigation on the part of the press.

O'Sullivan lived some two miles from the man-hole from which the remains of Dr. Cronin were taken. About one hundred and fifty feet from his house was a cottage known as 1872 Ashland avenue, afterwards spoken of as the "Carlson Cottage," from the name of its owner, Jonas Carlson, a Swede. Learning that this cottage had been recently occupied in a somewhat irregular way, it was visited on May 23d by three reporters, who were horrified at finding blood on the front steps and likewise on the sidewalk in front of the house. Securing an entrance to the cottage, what appeared to be evidences of a foul crime were plainly apparent. Numerous blood-stains were found, which possessed greater significance from the circumstance that efforts had been made to obliterate them by the free use of brown paint. The conclusion was reached that here was the place where Dr. Cronin had met his death.

The police at once took up this most promising clue, and State's Attorney Longenecker, Captain Schuettler of the city

police, and Captain Wing, of the Lake View police, after a hasty consultation, sent for O'Sullivan, who promptly responded to the summons.

Pressed by the state's attorney, the iceman told a plausible and seemingly truthful story. He believed that there had been something peculiar going on at the Carlson cottage. Two suspicious-looking men, he declared, had rented it of Carlson in March, claiming that they were to have employment in connection with his ice business, although they were entirely unknown to him.

The Carlsons, father, mother and son, were next sent for, and placed upon the rack, though there was no reason to suspect them of complicity in the crime. The facts elicited were substantially as follows: On March 20th a tall, slender young man had called on Mrs. Carlson and rented the cottage, paying a month's rent, $12, in advance, and receiving the keys. He gave his name as Frank Williams, and stated that a sister, who was to act as housekeeper, and two brothers, were coming in a few days from Baltimore, and would occupy the house with him. These relatives never appeared.

Three days later, about seven o'clock in the evening, some articles of furniture were brought to the cottage by an expressman, whose identity was not learned by the Carlson's, though it was ascertained by Charles Carlson, the son, that he was a Swede. Weeks passed and the little house remained unoccupied. On April 20th the tenant called again and paid another month's rent. The Carlsons asked why the cottage had not been occupied, saying that it did not look well to see it standing vacant. Williams replied that his sister had been detained, but that they would take possession in a few days.

On May 13th, when Dr. Cronin had been more than a week missing, a short, stout, light-haired man called on the Carlsons. He stated that Frank Williams had sent him to pay the rent, and added that his sister was sick and that he could not take possession for some time. The suspicions of Mrs. Carlson had been aroused by this peculiar method of paying rent in advance for an unoccupied house, and she declined to receive the money; nor could the man induce her to do so.

On May 18th a letter, posted at Hammond, Indiana, was delivered to Mr. Carlson. It was signed "F. W.," and notified the landlord that he could not use the cottage, and asked him to store the furniture in the place in his own basement, stating that he would call soon and pay him for his trouble. An investigation alarmed and astonished the Carlsons, but, instead of notifying the police, they waited for the appearance of their mysterious tenant.

At this point O'Sullivan was connected with the plot. The day Williams left his house with the keys, Jonas Carlson heard him say to the iceman: "Well, the cottage is rented." When the second month's rent was almost due, Carlson asked O'Sullivan if he knew Williams, to which the iceman replied: "Yes, I know one of the men. He is all right." O'Sullivan also stated that he would himself be responsible for one month's rent, if Williams did not appear and promptly pay it. On the evening of May 4th the old man had seen Williams standing on the front steps, and later had heard two men talking loudly in the front room of the cottage.

An investigation on the part of the police showed that the furniture found in the cottage, which was meagre in quantity, together with a large trunk, had been purchased of A. H. Revell & Co., on February 19th, by a young man who gave the name of J. B. Simonds, William T. Hatfield, an old employé, making the sale. The furniture was delivered at rooms 12 and 15, No. 117 South Clark street. This was directly across the street from the Chicago Opera House building, where both Dr. Cronin and Alexander Sullivan occupied offices.

On the day when Simonds purchased the furniture, he rented the two offices at No. 117 South Clark street, paying a month's rent, $42, in advance. On March 20th, when a representative of the landlord called to collect the next month's rent, he found the doors locked, the furniture and trunk having been removed.

The last doubt that might have lingered in the minds of the police as to Dr. Cronin having been murdered in the Carlson cottage was dispelled by new and most important and startling revelations made by William Mertes, a milkman of good

reputation, who lived on Woodside Avenue in Lake View, now a part of the city of Chicago.

On the evening of May 4th, between eight-thirty and nine o'clock, as Mertes was passing the Carlson cottage, a buggy, drawn by a white horse and containing two men, stopped in front of the house. A tall man alighted and ran rapidly up the steps. The door was opened before he had knocked, and the visitor at once entered. It had scarcely closed when the milkman heard loud and seemingly angry voices proceeding from the dwelling. In the meantime, the remaining occupant of the vehicle, whose face Mertes was not able to see, drove rapidly away. The details of a fiendish and most complicated plot were now well exposed, and naught remained but to arrest and bring the murderers to justice.

The city was now searched for the expressman who had removed the furniture and trunk from No. 117 South Clark street to the Carlson cottage. For some time not a clue was discovered, but after about two weeks' work the detectives found the man in the person of a Swede, named Hukon Mortensen. He had been employed by a man whose name he did not learn, but whose description tallied exactly with that given by the Carlsons of Frank Williams, to remove a lot of furniture from No. 117 South Clark street to the Carlson cottage, and had so removed it. Williams and another man brought the furniture out of the Clark-street building, and the former assisted Mortensen in carrying it into the cottage.

Iceman O'Sullivan had now fallen under great suspicion. He was not arrested, but was placed under strict surveillance, his every movement being closely and secretly watched.

So far an elaborate, far-reaching scheme had been developed, yet the plot went much further and included men of good standing in Chicago. It even invaded the police department, and involved officers who were paid to act as the conservators of the peace, and to ferret out crimes. Called forth in the night to exercise his art as a surgeon in the alleviation of human suffering and distress, humane Dr. Cronin was drawn to his death by a white horse. This horse became the objective point of many inquiries, and its discovery proved the

disgraceful exposure of a trusted member of the Chicago police force.

At the time of the Cronin murder, Daniel Coughlin was a city detective attached to the East Chicago Avenue Police Station, then under the direction of Captain Michael J. Schaack. Coughlin was one of the men detailed to run down the murderers, yet, instead of doing this, he contrived, by every means in his power, to throw the authorities off the track of the criminals. Daniel Coughlin was identified with the National Irish movement, and a prominent member of Camp Twenty of the Clan-na-Gael, in the councils of which the plot is supposed to have originated.

At No. 260 North Clark street, Patrick Dinan maintained a livery-stable. Coughlin knew Dinan well, and, on the morning of May 4th, called upon the latter and said: "I want you to keep a rig in readiness for a friend of mine to-night, and I don't want you to say a word about it. When he calls for it give it to him, and I'll be responsible for it."

About seven o'clock that evening the detective's "friend" called at the livery-stable as arranged, and announced that he had come for the horse ordered by Dan Coughlin. In response to this, Dinan ordered a white horse to be hitched to a buggy for the use of the customer. To this the latter protested vigorously, a white horse evidently not being to his liking. But the liveryman was obdurate, and the evidently-impatient friend of the detective accepted the "Hobson's choice," and drove away with the white horse. Shortly before nine-thirty he returned, drove into the barn, and, without waiting to speak with the hostler, who was in another part of the building, quitted the place.

The white horse preyed upon Dinan's mind, and two or three days after the discovery of Dr. Cronin's body he left his stable with the intention of laying the matter before Captain Schaack. On the steps of the station-house he met the man most vitally interested, Officer Daniel Coughlin, who anxiously inquired his business. Informed that the visit concerned the white horse, the detective became plainly excited, and exclaimed: "Look here, there is no use making a fuss

about this matter. You keep quiet about it. Me and Cronin were enemies, as lots of people know, and it might get me into trouble. Keep it to yourself, Dinan."

The liveryman assented, yet so strong was his mental reservation that he hastened to lay the entire matter before Captain Schaack, whom he chanced to meet. Instead of ordering Coughlin under arrest or acquainting the chief of police with the most important information, Schaack sent for the detective and frankly told him the story he had heard, at the same time asking for an explanation.

Coughlin had a ready-made story at hand. He had indeed engaged a horse from Dinan for a man named Smith, who had come to the station and introduced himself as a friend of the officer's brother at Hancock, Michigan. Beyond this he protested that he knew nothing. Schaack seems to have been deceived by this very artificial story, and simply told Coughlin to find Smith and bring him to the station.

While Detective Daniel Coughlin, assisted by Detective Michael Whalen, a cousin of O'Sullivan, was looking for the mythical Smith, Captain Schaack undertook a little investigation on his own account. He exhibited the horse and buggy to Mrs. Conklin. She was not very emphatic in her identification and Schaack afterwards claimed that she had utterly failed to recognize it. This the lady denied, claiming that she had told him it was remarkably like the one in which Dr. Cronin had been driven away from her flat.

While Schaack was temporizing, Dinan resolved to act and called upon Chief of Detectives Horace Elliott, to whom he stated the case. As a result, Coughlin was brought before Mayor Cregier Chief Hubbard, Col. W. P. Rend, and several other gentlemen, and rigidly examined for two hours. His answers were unsatisfactory and evasive, and he was sent to the armory police-station in a patrol wagon. At the same time, Detective Michael Whalen was suspended for neglect of duty.

The next day Coughlin's friend Smith appeared at police headquarters. He had known the detective at Hancock, Michigan, and had called on him recently at the police-station,

but had said nothing about securing a horse. The detective's explanation thus fell ingloriously to the ground.

In the meantime, a strong net had been woven around Patrick O'Sullivan, and on May 27th he was placed under arrest. Warrants against him and Coughlin were sworn out by John Joseph Cronin, the murdered physician's brother, and both of them were imprisoned in the county jail. On May 28th the grand jury indicted Coughlin, O'Sullivan, and Whalen. They were formally arraigned before Judge Williamson on May 31st, and remanded for trial.

The investigation of the coroner began on May 28th, and occupied eight days. It was one of the most sensational inquests ever held in the country, and excited world-wide interest. The facts already set forth were clearly established, and some new evidence of importance elicited. Coughlin and O'Sullivan were directly connected, it being shown that for some time before the eventful 4th of May they had held daily communication over the telephone. Evidence tending to show a conspiracy on the part of certain members of the Clan-na-Gael to take Dr. Cronin's life, was introduced, besides many things showing the animus of Alexander Sullivan, whom Cronin had accused of misappropriating funds raised for the Irish cause. Alexander Sullivan's speculations were also investigated, and it was shown that he had lost large sums of money on the Board of Trade. Luke Dillon, one of the nine members of the executive committee of the Clan-na-Gael in America, was particularly bitter in his denunciation of Sullivan, declaring that he had a decided interest in silencing the tongue of Dr. Cronin, who was in a fair way to expose his thefts and other crimes.

The jury recommended that Alexander Sullivan, Patrick O'Sullivan, Daniel Coughlin, and Frank Woodruff, alias Black, be held to the grand jury as principals in, or accessories to, the murder of Patrick Henry Cronin. That night Alexander Sullivan was arrested in his bed and imprisoned in the county jail.

The arrest of this man proved a sensation second only to the discovery of the mutilated and decomposing remains of Dr. Cronin, and widespread satisfaction was manifested, the

general opinion being that a blow had been struck at the root of the entire diabolical conspiracy. But the joy of lovers and upholders of the law was a short life. The following day the prisoner was brought before Chancellor Tuley, who admitted him to bail.

To the alertness and sagacity of John Collins, an Irish-American member of the Chicago police force, the connection of Martin Burke with the conspiracy was first suspected. Burke had been looked upon for some time as a tool of the Clan-na-Gael. He had become a member of the notorious Camp Twenty, and, through the aid of John F. Beggs, a lawyer afterwards involved in the plot, and that of Alexander Sullivan, obtained employment in the city sewer department. He frequented the low saloons of the North Side, and had been frequently heard to denounce Cronin as a British spy who ought to be "removed." These points attracted the attention of Officer Collins, and he became convinced that Burke had been connected with the murder.

Human life often turns upon seeming trifles, and an almost forgotten photograph led to the identification and subsequent arrest of Martin Burke. Some years before, a plot of land in Mount Olivet cemetery was dedicated as the last resting-place of Irish Nationalists. Upon this occasion a large group-photograph of many Clan-na-Gaels was taken, in which the form and face of Burke appeared. Officer Collins secured from the photographer who had taken the negative a copy of this picture, which he exhibited in turn to the three Carlsons and Hukon Mortensen, the expressman. All of these persons unhesitatingly selected Martin Burke in the picture as a portrait of the man who, under the name of Frank Williams, had rented the cottage and caused the furniture to be removed there from the offices on Clark Street.

But the bird had flown. A search, which proved fruitless, was at once instituted, but the officers were too late to apprehend the much-wanted man. The last trace found of him in Chicago was on the day of Dr. Cronin's funeral. He had exhibited quite a large sum of money and talked vaguely about making a trip to Ireland.

Weeks passed when, late one night, Chief Hubbard received the following dispatch:

"Winnipeg, Man., June 16, 1889.—Martin Burke, alias Delaney, arrested here on suspicion of complicity in the Cronin case. He was boarding the Atlantic Express, and had a ticket for Liverpool, England. McRae."

To this Chief Hubbard sent the following reply:

"Chicago, Ills., June 16, 1889.—Hold Martin Burke, alias Delaney, by all means. Will send officer immediately."

Burke had been arrested upon descriptions sent out by Chief Hubbard. At the time he was traveling under the name of W. J. Cooper. In a short time Officer Collins arrived, and soon after Expressman Mortensen, in charge of Officer J. M. Broderick. Fifty prisoners were brought forth, from whom the expressman speedily selected the suspect as Martin Burke.

That Burke had powerful friends was soon manifested. The best legal counsel was secured, and every effort made to prevent his extradition. But money proved powerless, and he was brought back to Chicago, where an indictment was promptly returned against him.

Before Martin Burke left Chicago, he had employed a tinsmith to seal up an oblong tin box. The clothing and surgical instruments of Dr. Cronin had not been found, and the belief gained ground that the general plot contemplated their shipment to Europe, that they might be there used to prove that the victim had arrived there, thus tending to establish the theory of the conspirators that he was a traitor to the Irish cause.

There is little doubt that this was the plan decided upon, for the tin box really contained the missing effects of the murdered physician. The discovery of the body doubtless changed the plans, which could not longer be made effective. Nearly six months after the murder, and while the trial was in progress, November 8, 1889, the long-searched-for tin box was found in a sewer, beneath a man-hole at the corner of Evanston and Buena avenues, a mile and a quarter southeast of where the body had been discovered in May. It contained the

clothing, surgical instruments and various other effects of the dead man, which were positively identified. His gold watch and well-filled purse were missing, which proved that the "patriotic murderers" were not above plain stealing. The discovery of the box and contents formed new and strong links in the chains drawn around the accused men.

A special grand jury met before Judge Shepard on June 12th, and indictments were returned against John F. Beggs, lawyer and Senior Guardian of Camp Number Twenty, Daniel Coughlin, Patrick O'Sullivan, Martin Burke, F. J. Woodruff, alias Black, John Kunze, and Patrick Cooney, alias "The Fox."

Strong efforts were made to include Alexander Sullivan in the list, but the evidence was regarded as insufficient to secure his conviction, and he escaped. The now notorious "Camp Twenty" was rigorously investigated. It appeared that Cronin had been repeatedly and vigorously denounced in this camp by Coughlin, O'Sullivan, Cooney, Burke and others, the claim being made that, like LeCarron, he was a British spy. It is not at all unlikely that some of the men afterwards implicated in the most awful crime of recent years, were led to believe that these charges were true, and that a feeling of false patriotism was called into action to accomplish the murder of the man who stood in the way of those who had directed the affairs of the Irish National party and stolen its funds. At length, John F. Beggs appointed a secret trial committee. Late in February it held several meetings, and at that time, it is supposed, the death of Dr. Cronin was decided upon.

Kunze was a German who had been under the protection of Dan Coughlin for some time. He was identified by the milkman, Mertes, as the man who drove Dr. Cronin to the Carlson cottage on the night of May 4th, and at the time it was believed that he was as guilty as the rest. Cooney, "The Fox," was not arrested, but is said to be in Chicago at the present writing.

The parties indicted for the murder of Dr. Cronin were arraigned on August 30, 1889, less than four months after the day when the crime was committed. The trial was held

before Judge S. P. McConnell, Joel M. Longenecker being the state's attorney. The best obtainable legal talent had been retained to prosecute and defend. Associated with the state's attorney were Luther Laflin Mills, George C. Ingham, and William J. Hynes. Coughlin was represented by attorneys Forrest and Wing; O'Sullivan and Kunze by Messrs. Donahue and David, while Senator Kennedy of Wisconsin and Messrs. Foote and Foster appeared for Martin Burke.

A long time was consumed in securing a jury, every man being most searchingly examined. The men who had planned the dastardly murder were not above disreputable methods, and, on the thirty-seventh day of the trial—or rather, of the efforts to secure a jury—a jury-bribing plot was laid bare before the court. The attempt to pack the jury seemed to be far-reaching. Six men were involved: Thomas Kavanaugh, steamfitter; Alexander L. Hanks, court-bailiff; Mark L. Solomon, court-bailiff; Fred W. Smith, hardware agent; Jeremiah O'Donnell, gauger; Joseph Kouen, fruit dealer. These were at once indicted by the grand jury. Later a true bill was found against John Graham, confidential clerk of A. S. Trude, a prominent attorney. Graham was supposed to have been the ring-leader in the enterprise, the real representative of the parties who supplied the money. None of these wretches were ever adequately punished.

The case against the defendants, as already set forth, was reinforced in many particulars, the testimony of a poor washerwoman, Paulina Hoertel, being especially forceful. On the night of May 4th, she saw the buggy drive up to the Carlson cottage; saw a tall man, presumably Dr. Cronin, alight and enter the house. He carried a black satchel or box in his left hand. The man who remained in the buggy drove the white horse rapidly away. Scarcely had the door closed when she heard a loud voice from within the cottage cry: "Oh, God!" Then there was a noise, what seemed to her like the sound of a blow, and a heavy fall. Then she heard the exclamation, "Jesus!". "I heard the far-away cry of Jesus," was the way the interpreter rendered her words.

As strong a defense was made as the circumstances of the

case admitted, alibis being the line principally relied upon. But in view of the awful chain of facts that had been forged by the State, it seemed lamentably weak.

The rebuttal evidence for the State proved strongly sensational, a matter that had just come to light being presented with great force. This was introduced on Friday, November 29th. On the preceding day Barney Flynn, a city detective who had arrested Coughlin, told Chief Hubbard that upon searching Coughlin at the station he had found two pocket knives, which had since been carefully kept. Both of these knives were positively identified by T. T. Conklin as having belonged to Dr. Cronin. As to one of them he was absolutely certain, since he had himself carried it for two years and then given it to Cronin. The other one he had found in the street some nine months before and carried home. This knife had struck the doctor's fancy, and he had appropriated it to his own uses, carrying it in his vest pocket.

The arguments of counsel occupied several days, and were presented with great force. The judge delivered a lengthy charge, and, on Friday, December 13, 1889, the jury retired to consider its verdict. The jury did not report until the afternoon of Monday, December 16th, having been locked up over seventy hours. It was afterwards ascertained that one member of the jury, John Culver, had held out against the other eleven to secure a sentence of imprisonment for life. The verdict was as follows:

"We, the jury, find the defendant Kunze guilty of manslaughter as charged in the indictment, and fix his punishment at imprisonment in the penitentiary for a term of three years.

"We, the jury, find the defendants, Daniel Coughlin, Patrick O'Sullivan and Martin Burke, guilty of murder in the manner and form as charged in the indictment, and fix the penalty at imprisonment in the penitentiary for the term of their natural lives."

This verdict failed to find popular favor. If Coughlin, Burke and O'Sullivan were guilty of the awful crime of murdering Dr. Cronin, they should, in popular estimation, have expiated it upon the scaffold. Feeling ran high against

Juror Culver, and charges of bribery were freely made, which, as a matter of course, he indignantly denied, bringing a libel suit against one Chicago newspaper.

Failing to secure a new trial in the court below, an appeal was taken and the convicted parties removed to the penitentiary at Joliet. Upon a review of the case by the Supreme Court, a new trial was ordered, and Daniel Coughlin was brought back to Chicago and placed in jail. Burke and O'Sullivan had completed the exact terms of their sentence, both having died in prison before the opinion of the court was handed down.

On December 6, 1893, a jury was secured before Judge Richard Tuthill, and the second trial of Daniel Coughlin for the murder of Dr. P. H. Cronin was formally begun. A full jury had been secured on November 24th, but three of its members were afterwards disqualified, as a result of charges of bribery and irregularity, and considerable time was consumed in filling their places. The State was represented by Elisha S. Bottum and Kickham Scanlon, while Daniel Donahue and Judge Wing appeared for the defendant.

Although less than four years had elapsed since the first trial, many of the witnesses could not be produced; several of them were dead, while a still larger number had disappeared. This greatly hampered the State. At the same time new and cumulative evidence was introduced which seemed to decidedly strengthen the case.

Milkman Mertes, who had with great difficulty been located in the far North and brought back to Chicago, testified that about eight o'clock on the night of May 4, 1889, he saw a buggy, drawn by a dark horse, drive up to the Carlson cottage. A large man, wearing a dark brown overcoat, sprang out and hurried up the steps, unlocking the door with a key.

"Did you ever see either of these men again?" the witness was asked.

"Yes," he replied.

"Where?"

"There he is sitting, one of the fellows."

The milkman pointed to the defendant Coughlin, and a

buzz of excitement ran through the court-room at this bit of most important and sensational testimony.

Mertes freely admitted that he had told many lies about the case, but, being now under oath, stoutly maintained that he was telling the truth. To candid minds an element of doubt must attach to this testimony. Why did Mertes not tell this story upon the first trial? In view of the verdict rendered, it is certain that the jury placed little credence in his statement.

Equally sensational testimony was given by Frank Bardeen. He was an engineer and for some time previous to May 1, 1889, had been in charge, as engineer, of the Edgewater electric light plant. He had left the place on May 1st, but called there on the night of May 4th. The man he sought was not there, so he sat down upon the steps. While there he saw a wagon being driven north on Evanston avenue, no great distance away. One man was driving the horse, while another was walking behind the wagon, in which was a large box, a tool chest, he took it to be at the time.

Near where Bardeen sat was a thirty-two candle power incandescent lamp in a locomotive head-light reflector. He turned this search-light upon the wagon and recognized in the man on foot the defendant Daniel Coughlin, whom he knew by sight. Bardeen could not swear to the exact time, but thought it was between one and two o'clock on the morning of May 5th that he saw Coughlin walking behind the wagon.

The testimony of this witness was somewhat shaken by the rigid cross-examination of Judge Wing. Bardeen stated that he saw the moon about four o'clock that morning while on his way home, whereas, as the State was forced to admit, the moon set on the night of May 4th before 11:38 o'clock. This mistake, no doubt, had the effect of greatly weakening the engineer's testimony in the minds of the jury.

Probably the strongest, because apparently the most truthful, of all the new testimony introduced was that of Mrs. Lizzie Foy. Her husband, Andrew Foy, was an Irish Nationalist prominently identified with the Clan-na-Gael, and had an undoubted connection with the plot which had its consummation in the "removal" of Dr. Cronin. She knew

many things bearing on the case, and finally, as a matter of conscience, was impelled to make a clean breast of the whole affair. Great efforts were made to prevent her from testifying, both by objections in court and threats and persecutions outside; indeed, for a long time she was furnished with police protection.

Her testimony was clear, distinct and of a decidedly incriminating character. Her house was visited by various members of the band of murderers. Coughlin, "Cooney the Fox," Martin Burke and some others were there at different times before May 4, 1889; Coughlin a number of times.

Andrew Foy was a member of Camp Twenty, a deadly foe of Dr. Cronin, and an intimate friend of Coughlin, Cooney and Burke. According to Mrs. Foy's testimony, the details of the plot were discussed in her house. She overheard enough to make it clear that some one was to be put to death, and that instructions had been received to that effect. On the night of the fateful May 4th, Andrew Foy went out early, before eight o'clock, and did not return until the following morning, when he stated that he had assisted in removing another Irish informer. Subsequently, Foy made a confession to his wife, giving all the details of the plot and the execution of the crime.

She swore that on the twelfth of May following the murder, about seven o'clock in the evening, Daniel Coughlin came to her house asking for her husband, who was not at home. Then she continued:

"I said, Andy is out all day; I say I am uneasy about him; I'm afraid he has got arrested; I say he ought to be coming home. He knows I wait dinner for him. He said: He will be all right. He said: there's no proof against Andy. He will be all right, he won't be arrested; he will turn up all right. I said: This is a bad thing you have done; better you had left Dr. Cronin alone; he will do more harm dead than alive. He said: Don't let anybody hear you talking like that; don't talk like that.

"I says: I am getting uneasy, I am worried about Andy. What am I to do with my seven children? He said: You will

be all right, you will be taken care of, you will be well looked after. I said: Who will look after me and my seven children? He said: Alexander Sullivan is a good friend of your husband's, and a good friend of mine. He will look after you all right."

Mrs. Foy was examined and cross-examined at great length, and it is impossible to present even an outline of her testimony. She was attacked by the defense, and an effort made to show that she had been influenced to testify as she did by Mrs. T. T. Conklin. Those who saw her on the witness stand and heard her tell her sad story, which was often interrupted with tears, were well convinced that she spoke truly.

Taken altogether, a strong case was presented by the State, though it would appear that too much was attempted in the way of new testimony, which was more or less discredited because it had not been brought forward on the first trial. After being out only six hours the jury brought in a verdict of not guilty.

It is difficult to understand how the jury reached the verdict they did. It was openly charged that they had been "fixed," and it seems not unlikely that some corrupt influence was employed, though to what extent it was carried it is impossible to even conjecture. Nearly five years had elapsed since the commission of the crime, and popular indignation had somewhat subsided; besides, as already suggested, it was impossible to produce all the witnesses who testified on the former trial.

A stronger case of circumstantial evidence has seldom been presented than was brought against Daniel Coughlin and his associates in crime. That the murder of Dr. Cronin was the result of the persistency with which he followed up Alexander Sullivan and some of his associates, cannot be doubted by any candid man who reads the testimony given on the two trials, though it seems most probable that some of the actors in the fearful tragedy were led to believe that he was a traitor who stood in the way of the cause of Ireland.

Taken for all in all, the results of the long prosecution

were far from satisfactory. Two of the assassins died in prison, it is true, but many of the conspirators escaped all punishment, except the almost universal scorn of their fellows. As for Daniel Coughlin, he opened a saloon in one of the principal down-town streets of Chicago, and has prospered far beyond his deserts.

DR. CRONIN ENTERING THE CARLSON COTTAGE.—PAGE 355.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HAYMARKET MASSACRE

A fearful crime, actuated by hatred of the law and the republican institutions of America, and carried into operation through the obligations of a secret oath, was perpetrated in Chicago, on the night of May 4, 1886. The details of this most sanguinary affair, which has passed into history as the "Haymarket Massacre," are still fresh in the minds of many, but a book which deals with the great homicides of the world would hardly be complete without some account of it.

For many years the socialists had been gaining in numbers in Chicago. The labor riots of 1877 gave them an opportunity to perfect organizations which had been languishing for a long time. The police forcibly dispersed a meeting called at the Voerwaerts Turner Hall, for the apparent purpose of inciting men to riot, and in doing so incurred the decided enmity of an organization whose members, under the best conditions, have no very friendly feeling, either for the law or its representatives. Few of these men were anarchists. Socialism and anarchy are two widely different things. The first, in its theoretical purity, looks to a more orderly arrangement of society than at present exists, while the latter arrogantly demands the abolition of all law. At the same time, socialism is the training-school in which anarchists are educated; indeed, but for the one, the other would speedily die out through lack of members. By 1886 a large number of anarchists were domiciled in the metropolis of the west, and grave fears for the safety of the city were entertained by the authorities. The conditions were most favorable for riot and disorder. During the winter of 1885 and 1886 a labor agita-

tion to secure for the working class an eight-hour day, was in progress in all parts of the country. It was proposed to carry this into effect May 1, 1886. A general strike seemed imminent, and, all over the land, capital and labor were closely watching each other's movements. Two organs, devoted to anarchy, were at that time published in Chicago: the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, edited by August Spies, and the *Alarm*, edited by A. R. Parsons. These two men were recognized leaders of the anarchists, and with them was included Samuel Fielden and some others.

For some time before the day set for the general strikes of organized labor, May 1, 1886, there had been a strike in the great McCormick Reaper Works, on Blue Island avenue, or the "Black Road," as it was designated by the workingmen. It was here that the anarchist leaders saw their opportunity, and endeavored by all possible means in their power to inflame the passions of men already smarting under what they doubtless thought rank injustice. Warned by incendiary articles in the *Arbeiter Zeitung* and the *Alarm*, the police were expecting an organized outbreak against capital, and were using every means to be prepared to meet it. On the afternoon of May 2d, the "Black Road" was the scene of a singular spectacle—a company of anarchists marching along with the American flag reversed. They were as desperate a body of men as ever assembled in this country, and were speedily reinforced by large numbers of the strikers. Halting on the prairie in front of the McCormick works, August Spies made a highly inflammatory speech, which resulted in an assault upon the works, the destruction of considerable property and the injury of a number of non-union workmen, who were employed there in place of the strikers. Only six police officers were on duty to oppose a mob of three thousand enraged strikers and anarchists. A call for assistance brought about thirty officers, who charged the mob and succeeded in dispersing it, but not until one striker had been killed by a bullet from a revolver, and several seriously injured. This encounter was the direct cause of the bloody scenes we are called upon to recount. That night an anarchist circular, printed in English

and German, was widely circulated. The German version differed somewhat from the other, being a little more pronounced, and was addressed to well-known anarchists and socialists. The English portion was as follows:

"REVENGE!

"Revenge, workingmen! to arms! Your masters sent out their bloodhounds—the police. They killed six of your brothers at McCormick's this afternoon. They killed the poor wretches because they, like you, had the courage to disobey the supreme will of your bosses. They killed them because they dared to ask for the shortening of the hours of toil. They killed them to show you, 'free American citizens,' that you must be satisfied and contented with whatever your bosses condescend to allow you, or you'll get killed. You have for years endured the most abject humiliation; you have for years suffered immeasurable iniquities; you have worked yourselves to death; you have endured the pangs of want and hunger; your children you have sacrificed to the factory lords—in short, you have been miserable, obedient slaves all these years. Why? To satisfy the insatiable greed, to fill the coffers of your lazy, thieving master. When you ask them now to lessen your burden, he sends his bloodhounds out to shoot you, kill you. If you are men, if you are the sons of your grandsires who have shed their blood to free you, then you will rise in your might, Hercules, and destroy the hideous monster that seeks to destroy you. To arms, we call you! To arms!

"YOUR BROTHERS."

In addition to this a circular was distributed calling a meeting of workingmen at the Haymarket, on the night of May 4th, and urging men to go there armed. What is known as the "Haymarket" is a section of West Randolph street, about a fourth of a mile from the Chicago River. Here, for two blocks, the street is very wide, and is used as a public market. In the olden time, large quantities of hay were sold there, which gave the place its name. The circular was as follows:

ATTENTION WORKINGMEN!

:-:-:-:- :-:

—GREAT—

MASS MEETING

To-night, at 7:30 o'clock,

—AT THE—

Haymarket, Randolph St., Between Desplaines and Halsted,

Good speakers will be present to denounce the latest atrocious act of the police, the shooting of our fellow-workmen yesterday afternoon.

WORKINGMEN, ARM YOURSELVES AND APPEAR IN FULL FORCE!

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

After a portion of the circular had been printed, Spies caused the words "Workingmen, arm yourselves and appear in full force," to be stricken out, and several thousand were printed without this sentence. Spies said upon the trial that he did this because he feared it might be the means of keeping people away. In the *Arbeiter Zeitung* appeared the letter "Y," meaning Ypsilon, which was afterwards shown to be the agreed signal for the armed anarchists to turn out in force. In the "Letter Box" of the same paper appeared the word "Ruhe," which conveyed to all organized anarchists the information that the time for revolution had come.

When it is understood that for months past these two organs of the anarchists had abounded in revolutionary articles, denouncing the law and advocating the use of force, the responsibility of the men who wrote and circulated such articles seems, to the mind of the layman, well established.

At the appointed time the meeting, destined to mark an epoch in the history of anarchy, was called to order. It was not held in the Haymarket proper, but in Desplaines street, just north of Randolph Street. A wagon had been pressed into use as a platform. Not much more than a hundred yards south of this wagon was located the Desplaines street police-station. Here a large force of police officers had been concentrated, the authorities fearing a serious outbreak. Spies was the first speaker. The following extract is from a short-hand report of his speech, proved at the trial to be correct:

"It is said that I have inspired the attack on McCormick's. That is a lie. The fight is going on; now is the chance to strike for the existence of the oppressed classes. The oppressors want us to be content; they will kill us. The thought of liberty which inspired your sires to fight for their freedom ought to animate you to-day. The day is not far distant when we will resort to hanging these men. [Applause and cries of 'Hang them now!'] McCormick is the man who created the row Monday, and he must be held responsible for the murder of our brothers. [Cries of 'Hang him!'] Don't make any threats; they are of no avail; when you get ready to do something, do it and don't make any threats beforehand."

Parsons, the only native-born American among all the prominent actors in the fearful tragedy, spoke next. From the same shorthand report the following is taken:

"It behooves you, as you love your wife and children—if you don't want to see them perish with hunger, killed or cut down like dogs on the street,—Americans, in the interest of your liberty and your independence, to arms! arm yourselves!"

Samuel Fielden followed in quite a long speech. His concluding remarks, from the same reliable report, were as follows:

"The law makes no distinction. A million men own all the property in this country. The law has no use for the other fifty-four million. [A voice, 'Right enough!'] You have nothing more to do with the law except to lay hands on it, and throttle it until it makes its last kick. It turns your brothers out upon the wayside, and has degraded them until they have lost the last vestige of humanity, and they are mere things and animals. Keep your eyes upon it! Throttle it! Kill it! Stab it! Do everything you can to wound it, to impede its progress. Remember, before trusting them to do anything for you, prepare to do it for yourself. Don't turn over your business to anybody else. No man deserves anything unless he is man enough to make an effort to lift himself from oppression. Is it not a fact that we have no choice as to our existence, for we can't dictate what our labor is worth? He

that has to obey the will of any is a slave. Can we do anything except by the strong arm of resistance? Socialists are not going to declare war; but I tell you, war has been declared upon us, and I ask you to get hold of anything that will help to resist the onslaught of the enemy and the usurper. The skirmish-lines have met. People have been shot. Men, women and children have not been spared by the capitalists and minions of private capital. It had no mercy, so ought you. What matters it whether you kill yourselves with work to get a little relief, or die on the battle-field resisting the enemy? What is the difference? Any animal, however loathsome, will resist when stepped upon. Are men less than snails and worms? I have some resistance in me; I know that you have, too. You have been robbed, and you will be starved into a worse condition."

When the anarchist had reached this point in his harangue, Captain William Ward, of the Desplaines street station, with a hundred and eighty policemen behind him, appeared upon the scene. Halting a few feet from the wagon, Captain Ward said, in a loud voice: "I command you, in the name of the people of the State of Illinois, to immediately and peaceably disperse."

This command, made in strict accordance with the laws of the State, was not accompanied with any act of violence, nor was it accompanied with any threat, unless it could be implied, from the ranks of the blue-coated conservators of the peace. The claim was made, and is still made, that the attack which followed was in self-defense. The absurdity of this is apparent. In the judgment of the authorities, the meeting was a menace to law and order, and they were justified in dispersing it.

Fielden replied: "We are peaceable." Whether or not these words were a signal for action, may never be known; but immediately a bomb with a lighted fuse swept through the air and fell in the midst of the officers. It exploded at once, and dealt death and destruction; sixty being wounded, of whom seven subsequently died. For an instant only, the police wavered; then, closing their ranks, they poured volley

after volley from their ready revolvers into the ranks of the rioters, many of whom were wounded and some killed; the exact number never having been ascertained, as many were helped away by friends and their cases never reported.

This terrible denouement of a long series of threats on the part of organized anarchy threw the city into a condition bordering on frenzy, and fairly convulsed the entire nation. The *Arbeiter Zeitung* was suppressed, and the mayor issued a proclamation commanding the people not to assemble in crowds. A systematic search of anarchist headquarters resulted in the discovery and seizure of large quantities of arms and dynamite bombs, together with red flags, banners and anarchistic literature. Eight anarchist leaders were arrested and indicted for murder, and twenty-six others for conspiracy and treason. Those indicted and tried for murder were August Spies, a German by nationality, editor of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, and one of the leading anarchist agitators; A. R. Parsons, an American—brother of the Confederate general, Lew Parsons—commander-at-large of the anarchists, whose wife, an octoroon, was also a violent agitator; Samuel Fielden, English by nationality, a carpenter by trade, and a noted agitator; Oscar Neebe, German, laborer in a brewery and circulator of the *Arbeiter;* Adolph Fischer, German, compositor on and circulator of the *Arbeiter;* George Engel, German, anarchist agitator; Michael Schwab, German, associate editor of the *Arbeiter*, and Louis Lingg, German and professional anarchist.

On the day after the murder, Rudolph Schnaubelt was arrested by the city detectives, charged with complicity in the attack upon the police. The extent of the horrid conspiracy was not at that time appreciated, or even dreamed of, and Schnaubelt, answering all questions in a satisfactory manner, was released by the police and immediately disappeared, and was never re-arrested, although it subsequently appeared highly probable that he was the man who actually threw the fatal bomb. A. R. Parsons also disappeared, but when the case was called for trial, he came into court and smilingly gave himself up.

The eight anarchists were speedily put on trial before Hon. Joseph E. Gary, for conspiracy and murder. Spies, Fielden, Schwab and Neebe attempted to secure separate trials, but this was refused on the ground that they were indicted jointly, for a conspiracy. After some four weeks had been spent in examining talesmen, a jury was at length secured, and the real trial of the anarchists began by the taking of evidence on Friday, July 16, 1886. The trial occupied some five weeks, and was strongly contested at every point, both the State and defense being represented by able lawyers. The verdict of the jury was returned on the morning of Friday, the 20th day of August, and was as follows:

"We, the jury, find the defendants, August Spies, Michael Schwab, Samuel Fielden, Albert R. Parsons, Adolph Fischer, George Engel and Louis Lingg, guilty of murder in manner and form as charged in the indictment, and fix the penalty at death. We find the defendant Oscar W. Neebe guilty of murder in manner and form as charged in the indictment, and fix the penalty at imprisonment in the penitentiary for fifteen years."

To go into this trial and undertake to present even an outline of the voluminous testimony would far transcend the limits that can be assigned to this case in the present volume. Some of the anarchists who were under indictment for conspiracy turned State's evidence. In this way the terrible significance of the "Y" and "Ruhe" printed in the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, was ascertained. Gottfried Waller, a Swiss cabinet-maker, and a member of the Lehr und Wehr Verein, testified that this society was made up of various groups of armed anarchists. He swore that the publication of the letter "Y" meant an appointment for a meeting of the armed section at Grief's Hall. At this meeting, the witness acted as chairman. About eighty anarchists were present, among them Engel and Fischer. He further testified that Engel proceeded to unfold a plan by which, in the event of a collision occurring between the strikers and the police, the word "Ruhe" in the *Arbeiter Zeitung* should be understood as the signal for the Lehr and Wehr and the

Northwest group of anarchists to assemble in the northwestern part of the city, armed and ready for action. The plan was to then proceed to storm the North Avenue police-station, and, after demolishing that, proceed to the other police-stations of the city, which were likewise to be destroyed. Dynamite was to be employed in the work of destruction, and all who offered opposition to the movement for the promotion of anarchy were to be shot down. As a part of the plan, and without which it would have been foredoomed to failure, all the telegraph wires were to be cut, those communicating with the outside world as well as those connecting the different portions of the city. Engel declared that this plan had already been adopted by the Northwest group. It was expected that, in the intense disorder that would ensue, large numbers of angry strikers would join the anarchists and a revolution be effected in the city.

It was at this time that the meeting at the Haymarket on May 4th was arranged, Fischer being intrusted with the work of preparing and circulating the necessary handbills. Waller was corroborated by other witnesses, and there is not the slightest doubt but what the dastardly plan he recounted, which meant the loss of thousands of lives and the sacking and, very possibly, burning of the city, had been deliberately planned by men whose watchword was "Death to the Law." In the meantime, as was abundantly proved, the anarchists had for some time been employed in manufacturing dynamite bombs of various kinds, and were all heavily armed. Louis Lingg was the most active in the manufacture of explosives, and maintained a regular factory where, in connection with several others, he turned them out in large numbers. By direct evidence, all the defendants, with the exception of Oscar Neebe, were connected with the fearful conspiracy. Neebe distributed the circulars, but was not very closely connected, by the evidence, with the transaction.

Anarchy is, most happily, detested and abhorred by the American people, with exceptions so rare as only to emphasize the rule. Of the active anarchists in this country, not one in fifty is an American by birth. It is entirely natural that

the outrageous acts of these men should meet with the absolute disapproval of all law-abiding citizens, and there is quite a widely-disseminated idea that the anarchists were convicted as a matter of policy; that the law was strained in their case, and that the verdict of the jury, though most salutary in its effect, was hardly warranted by the law and the evidence. This notion is clearly wrong. In a very able and quite comprehensive article by Hon. Joseph E. Gary, the judge who presided at the trial of the anarchists, published in the Century Magazine for April, 1893, the justice of their conviction is clearly shown. We wish every American could read it; the popular opinion of this noted trial would surely be changed by the operation. The concluding paragraph of this remarkable article may well be quoted:

"For nearly seven years the clamor, uncontradicted, has gone round the world that the anarchists were heroes and martyrs, victims of a prejudice and fear. Not a dozen persons alive were prepared by familiarity with the details of their crime and trial, and present knowledge of the materials from which those details could be shown, to present a succinct account of them to the public. It so happened that my position was such that from me that account would probably attract as much attention as it would from any other source. Right-minded, thoughtful people, who recognize the necessity of civilization, of the existence and enforcement of laws for the protection of human life, and who yet may have had misgivings as to the fate of the anarchists, will, I trust, read what I have written, and dismiss those misgivings, convinced that in law and in morals the anarchists were rightly punished, not for opinions, but for horrible deeds."

The remarks of the distinguished jurist in passing sentence upon the eight men, while thoughtful, dignified and touching, are so far different from those usually heard upon like solemn occasions, and so clearly elucidate the position of the court as to the guilt of the convicted men in the eyes of the law, that they are produced here. We commend them to the careful consideration of every man who wishes to see upheld and perpetuated the free institutions of America.

"I am quite well aware that what you have said, although addressed to me, has been said to the world," began the judge, "yet nothing has been said which weakens the force of the proof, or the conclusions therefrom upon which the verdict is based. You are all men of intelligence, and know that, if the verdict stands, it must be executed. The reasons why it shall stand I have already sufficiently stated in deciding the motion for a new trial. I am sorry, beyond any power of expression, for your unhappy condition, and for the terrible events that have brought you to it. I shall address to you neither reproaches nor exhortations. What I shall say will be said in the faint hope that a few words from a place where the people of the State of Illinois have delegated the authority to declare the penalty of a violation of their laws, and spoken upon an occasion so solemn and awful as this, may come to the knowledge of, and be heeded by, the ignorant, deluded, and misguided men who have listened to your counsels and followed your advice. I say in the faint hope; for if men are persuaded that because of business differences, whether about labor or anything else, they may destroy property, and assault and beat other men, and kill the police, if they, in the discharge of their duty, interfere to preserve the peace, there is little ground to hope that they will listen to any warning.

"Not the least among the hardships of the peaceable, frugal and laborious poor, it is to endure the tyranny of mobs, who with lawless force dictate to them, under penalty of peril to limb and life, where, when and upon what terms they may earn a livelihood for themselves and their families. Any government that is worthy of the name will strenuously endeavor to secure to all within its jurisdiction, freedom to follow their lawful avocations in safety for their property and their persons while obeying the law.

"*And the law is common-sense.*

"It holds each man responsible for the natural and probable consequences of his own acts. It holds that whoever advises murder is himself guilty of the murder that is committed pursuant to his advice; and if men band together for forcible resistance to the execution of the law, and advise

murder as the means of making such resistance effectual, whether such advice to one man to murder another, or to a numerous class to murder men of another class, all who are so banded together are guilty of any murder that is committed in pursuance of such advice.

"The people of this country love their institutions. They love their homes. They love their property. They will never consent that by violence and murder those institutions shall be broken down, their homes despoiled, and their property destroyed. And the people are strong enough to protect and sustain their institutions, and to punish all offenders against their laws; and those who threaten danger to civil society, if the law is enforced, are leading to destruction whoever may attempt to execute such threats.

"The existing order of society can be changed only by the will of the majority.

"Each man has the full right to entertain, and advocate by speech and print, such opinions as suit himself, and the great body of the people will usually care little what he says; but if he proposes murder as a means of enforcing them, he puts his own life at stake; and no clamor about free speech, or evils to be cured, or wrongs to be redressed, will shield him from the consequences of his crime. His liberty is not a license to destroy. The toleration he enjoys he must extend to others, and not arrogantly assume that the great majority are wrong, and may rightly be coerced by terror, or removed by dynamite.

"It only remains that for the crime you have committed, and of which you have been convicted, after a trial unexampled in the patience with which an outraged people have extended to you every protection and privilege of the law which you derided and defied, the sentence of the law be now pronounced. In form and detail that sentence will appear upon the records of the court. In substance and effect it is that the defendant Neebe be imprisoned in the State penitentiary at Joliet at hard labor for the term of fifteen years; and that each of the other defendants, between the hours of ten o'clock in the forenoon and two o'clock in the afternoon of the 3d day of

December next, in the manner provided by the statute, be hung by the neck until he is dead."

Before the sentence was pronounced, each of the convicted men addressed the court, some of them talking at great length. The speech of Parsons, who, at his own request, was the last to address the court, occupied nine hours, and the eight defendants consumed three entire days. All of them were men of intelligence and some of them possessed rather remarkable gifts of oratory. Their remarks were listened to with the closest attention, thousands being unable to obtain admission to the court-room. These speeches now form a leading portion of the gospel of anarchy, and are the text-books in the schools where men are taught that all law should be abolished and mankind started on a retrograde movement toward barbarism. The most extreme and violent of all the condemned men was Louis Lingg. His speech was bitter, but had about it the true ring of anarchy, and wrought almost to frenzy the misguided adherents of the abolition of the reign of law. We quote the concluding sentences of his impassioned and impudent tirade:

"You smile. You perhaps think I will not use bombs any more, but I tell you I die gladly upon the gallows in the sure hope that hundreds and thousands of people to whom I have spoken will now recognize and make use of dynamite. In this hope I despise you, and I despise your laws. Hang me for it."

No efforts were spared to save the lives of the condemned men. An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of Illinois, where the judgment of the Criminal Court was sustained. The opinion of the Court, prepared by Mr. Justice Benjamin D. Magruder, was filed September 14, 1887, and is a legal document of great ability, destined to become a much-quoted authority in similar trials, if the hydra-headed monster, Anarchy, again displays its poisoned fangs in America.

The Supreme Court, as provided by the statute, fixed a day for the execution of the seven condemned to death, naming November 11, 1887. Before that time the Governor of Illinois commuted the sentence of Schwab and Fielden to

imprisonment for life. On November 10th, the day before the execution, Louis Lingg committed suicide in his cell in the county jail. He carried his devotion to dynamite to the end. He managed to secure a small stick of the deadly explosive, or a fulminating cap, it was never certainly known which, by means of which he blew his head to pieces. The others were executed pursuant to their sentence. There was intense excitement at the time, and an uprising of the anarchists was feared, but the day passed without any further outbreak occurring. The anarchists had encountered the law, and had not found it to their liking.

It was believed at the time when the sentences of Schwab and Fielden were commuted to imprisonment for life, that they would end their lives in prison. But the law-supporting citizens of Illinois had not taken into account the possibilities of elections. There are comparatively few anarchists in the State, but there are large numbers of organized socialists who ardently desired the release of the three prisoners. They represented many thousands of votes, and could exert a great influence on elections. On June 26, 1893, John P. Altgeld, Governor of the State of Illinois, granted a full and free pardon to Fielden, Schwab and Neebe, the latter of whom was serving a term of fifteen years.

It is only fair to state that a strong pressure was brought to bear upon Governor Altgeld, many prominent citizens having interested themselves in behalf of the imprisoned anarchists. Had the chief executive confined himself to pardoning them there would have been comparatively little complaint. It was generally believed that Neebe's connection with the awful tragedy was very slight, and that neither Schwab nor Fielden were as guilty as those who suffered death. The law had been amply vindicated, the prisoners had learned a lesson likely to last them for the remainder of their lives, and an act of clemency would tend to allay bitter feelings and conduce to the peace and quiet of the State.

But the Governor was not satisfied with this course. He prepared and gave out for publication a long statement, which amounted for the most part to an argument attempting to

demonstrate that the entire eight men had been unjustly convicted. In this behalf he analyzed the evidence with great minuteness and undoubted ingenuity. Not satisfied with an attempt to discredit the juries and judicial methods of the State—and such a paper from the chief executive could not but have a marked effect in that direction—he made a bitter personal attack upon Hon. Joseph E. Gary, the venerable judge who presided at the trial. Probably no man in Illinois is more widely known or more generally respected as a citizen of unblemished character and a jurist of great ability and scrupulous honesty, than Judge Gary. In consequence of this, Governor Altgeld was severely criticised, by prominent members of his own party as well as by the opposition. Certain it is that his action has had a bad effect upon the State and the nation, viewed from the standpoint—which, most happily, still prevails in this country—that American laws and institutions must be sustained.

CHAPTER XXII

THE PALMER POISONING CASE

The Old Bailey, which still stands in London opposite grim Newgate, with its prison record of six centuries, has been the scene of many historic trials, its record in this regard being, probably, unapproached by any structure now existing in the world. A long line of murderers, highwaymen and felons of all kinds and descriptions, have there been arraigned, tried and sent away to ignominious deaths. It may well be doubted, however, whether the Old Bailey ever witnessed a trial that excited greater interest among the people of Great Britain than that of William Palmer, held within its precincts before the Central Criminal Court, in May, 1856.

It was not the atrocity of the crime, but the difficulty of establishing it, the defense made, and the clash of expert witnesses, that aroused the most intense interest among all classes of society, vulgar and polite, ignorant and scientific. A large portion of the leading medical and chemical experts of England, Scotland and Ireland testified, either for the Crown or prisoner, in the Palmer trial, and it has since been recognized as the leading case where murder was consummated through the employment of strychnine.

The murder was committed at the town of Rugeley, in Staffordshire, England. The community was aroused to a high pitch of indignation, the evident prejudice against the prisoner being very great. Accordingly, through his counsel, the prisoner applied for a change of venue, expressing a desire to be tried before the Central Criminal Court in London. This went beyond the power of the court to grant, but permission was given by a special act of Parliament, and the pris-

oner was removed to Newgate to stand trial for his life in the Old Bailey.

William Palmer began life as a chemist and druggist in the town of Rugeley, county Stafford, in the central portion of England. In this employment he acquired quite an intimate knowledge of drugs and chemicals, and later became a medical practitioner. He soon wearied of his profession, however, and betook himself to the turf, where he bet largely on the races, owning some race-horses himself. In the meantime, he sold his chemist's shop to an assistant named Thirlby. At the time of the murder, Palmer, who was about thirty-one years of age, had dissipated the little fortune he had once possessed, and was in great financial embarrassment.

John Parsons Cook, for whose murder Palmer was sent to the scaffold, was a man of a somewhat similar history. When quite young—he was but eight and twenty at the time of his death—he began the study of the law, but, falling into some property, about £15,000, he abandoned the idea of becoming a practitioner, and, like Palmer, adopted the race-course as a means of obtaining a livelihood. Similar in their antecedents, history, education and tastes, these two young men met some three or four years before the tragedy, and became intimate, almost inseparable, friends. Palmer was possessed of the stronger will, the greater intellect, and speedily acquired a dominant influence over his friend.

That Palmer was a rascal, entitled to a high place in the world of sharpers, is evident from his financial operations, in which forgery and fraud held a prominent place. Some account of these transactions is necessary to an understanding of the motives that led him to kill his friend and associate; besides, they cut an important figure in his celebrated trial.

Difficulties are liable to arise in any calling in life, but are more likely to confront those who rely upon gambling for a livelihood. Horse-racing proved disastrous to both these young men. As early as 1853 Palmer had practically exhausted his resources. For a time he seems to have secured assistance from his mother, who was a woman of

some wealth, but in 1853 he began to raise money on bills, which he discounted at ruinous rates with different brokers, doing the most of it through a London solicitor named Pratt. Finally, he began to discount bills bearing the forged signature of his mother, Sarah Palmer.

His relations with Pratt appear to have begun in the latter part of 1854, at which time he owed large sums on bills, a considerable portion of which was due and sadly pressing him. In September of that year his wife, whose life was insured in his favor for £13,000, about $65,000, died, and with this money, through the instrumentality of Pratt, he paid off some of the most annoying of his debts.

In 1854 Palmer effected an insurance for £13,000 in the name of his brother, the policy being assigned to him. Upon this policy as security, he discounted, through Mr. Pratt, bills aggregating £12,500, all of which bore the forged signature of his mother. In 1855 Palmer's brother died. The rogue had doubtless expected to pay off his liabilities from the proceeds of the insurance policy, but the company declined to pay it, setting up fraud as a defense. Whether Palmer killed his brother, as was freely intimated after his arrest for the murder of Cook, will never be known, but the suspicion was heightened by the circumstance that, after failing to collect the policy, he took steps to insure the life of an employé, a man named Bates, for £25,000. The company declined to take so large a risk, and the application was reduced to £10,000. The office now made a searching inquiry, learned that Bates was a person possessed of neither wealth nor standing in society, and declined to have any dealings with him. In this negotiation Cook took a prominent part. In September, 1855, Palmer had outstanding discounted bills aggregating £11,500. Several of them were overdue, and all of them bore the forged signature of Sarah Palmer.

On November 6, 1855, Pratt caused two writs for £4,000 each to issue. One of these was against Palmer, and the other against his mother. In notifying Palmer of the event, Pratt informed him that he would hold the writs for a few days, thus giving him an opportunity to renew them by paying

something on them, and also to arrange for another bill that would become due in a few days.

Ruin, disgrace and penal servitude thus stared Palmer in the face. Cook had a race-horse named Polestar entered for the Shrewsbury races, to be run on November 13th. The horse was a good one and Cook had backed it quite heavily. On that day both Palmer and Cook were at Shrewsbury, the former having borrowed £25 to pay the expenses of the journey, which shows that he was otherwise without money. Polestar won the race and Cook's winnings, including the purse, amounted to over £2,000. Of this he collected over £700 upon the course, the remainder being payable in London a week later.

In his desperate condition, Palmer seems to have decided to take the life of his friend, since the money Cook had, and that which was due him, would enable him to make some kind of terms with Pratt. On the night of November 14th, Cook, who occupied a room next to Palmer's at the Raven Hotel in Shrewsbury, invited a Mr. Fisher, a sporting man who sometimes acted as his agent in collecting bets at Tattersall's in London, and who, with another sporting man named Herring, occupied an adjoining room, to have a glass of brandy and water in his apartment.

Entering the room, Fisher found Cook and Palmer sitting at a table, Cook having a tumbler of brandy and water before him. Cook invited Palmer to drink another glass, but the latter declined unless Cook would first finish his glass. This Cook promptly did, and immediately exclaimed: "Good God! there is something in it that burns my throat."

A trifle was left in the glass, and Palmer at once drained it, declaring that there was nothing wrong with it. He then offered the glass to Fisher, and asked him to taste it, but none of the liquor remained.

In a few minutes Cook was taken suddenly ill, vomiting violently and with great frequency. A medical man was sent for and the vomiting continued for some two hours. When first taken sick Cook, who seems to have been suspicious of Palmer, gave his money, amounting to over £700 in notes, to

Fisher, which the latter returned to him the following day, Cook being then much better. On that day a horse of Palmer's called Chicken lost in a race, leaving the unfortunate man in a still more deplorable financial condition.

On the night when Cook became so suddenly and violently ill after drinking the brandy and water, and just before that occurrence, a woman named Mrs. Brooks, who kept a register for jockeys and secured them employment, called to see Palmer with reference to hiring him a jockey to ride his horse, Chicken, the following day. As she entered the lobby, out of which the rooms of Cook and Palmer opened, she saw the latter holding a tumbler up against the gas-light and curiously scrutinizing its contents. Then he entered his own room, from which he soon emerged, still carrying the glass, and passed into the apartment occupied by Cook.

The poison administered to Cook by Palmer at the Raven was undoubtedly antimony, the theory of the Crown being that the murderer was preparing to safely kill his victim with the strychnine by first administering antimony, which is the active ingredient of tartar emetic and produces vomiting. The analysis of Cook's vital organs after his death showed the undoubted presence of antimony, and none had been administered by the physicians during his sickness.

On Thursday, November 15th, after ten o'clock at night, the two sporting men reached Rugeley, Cook going to a hotel known as the Talbot Arms, Palmer to his own house, which was directly across the street. Cook announced that he had been very ill at Shrewsbury, but was nearly well again. The next day he went out and dined with Palmer, returned to the hotel in a state of perfect sobriety about ten o'clock and went to bed. The next morning Palmer called early and gave Cook some coffee, after drinking which he was taken violently ill, vomiting exactly as he had at Shrewsbury. During the next two days, Saturday and Sunday, Palmer was almost constantly with Cook, everything that he ate or drank passing through his hands.

About noon on Saturday, Palmer went to his house, where he caused a basin of broth to be brought from the Albion, an

inn of Rugeley. Having heated it in the kitchen, he gave it to a woman and told her to take it across the street to Cook. The latter swallowed a little of it, but it immediately made him sick and was carried downstairs. Coming in a little later, Palmer declared that the patient must take the broth, and caused it to be brought up again. At Palmer's command Cook swallowed a little, which almost immediately produced a violent fit of vomiting. It afterwards appeared that a woman named Elizabeth Mills, a servant in the hotel, thinking the broth looked very nice, had drank two tablespoons of it when first sent down from the sick man's room. As a result, she became very ill, and was compelled to remain in bed all the afternoon, vomiting much of the time.

On Saturday afternoon Dr. Bamford, of Rugeley, was called in. Palmer had informed him that the patient was suffering from a bilious attack and had been taking too much wine. Dr. Bamford found not the slightest indication of biliousness, while Cook, in the presence of Palmer, stated that he had only taken two glasses of wine on the preceding evening. Later in the day, and during the evening, Palmer administered coffee and arrowroot to the sick man, which brought on violent attacks of vomiting.

On Sunday Palmer brought Bamford again, who found the vomiting still continuing, with nothing to indicate the cause, there being not the slightest indication of bile, the pulse being about normal, and respiration quite regular. On Monday morning Palmer brought a cup of coffee to his sick friend, which immediately brought on a fit of vomiting. After that Palmer took a train for London, and did not return until night. During his absence Mr. Cook's condition decidedly improved, the vomiting ceased, and he announced himself as much better. This was no wonder, since there was no one at Rugeley to administer irritating antimony during the absence of the poisoner.

But it was not motives of humanity that took William Palmer down to London. He was obliged to delay his fiendish work, but had no notion of abandoning it. John Carsons Cook had something more than £1,000 coming to

him in London, and Monday was settling day at Tattersall's. But Palmer did not call at the counting-rooms of the great sporting house; he was in default on their books, and did not dare to present himself. Instead, he called on Cook's agent, Mr. Fisher, and requested him to make the collections, telling him that Cook had agreed to let him have the money. With the cash thus fraudulently secured, Palmer was able to satisfy Pratt and another man to whom he owed a bill and gain a little delay, promising more money in a few days.

Monday night Palmer returned to Rugeley and proceeded to call upon a man named Newton, the assistant to a surgeon named Salt, from whom he secured three grains of strychnine. Newton thought nothing of this at the time, since strychnine was sometimes, though rarely, used in medicine, and he knew Palmer to be a medical man. That same evening Dr. Bamford called at the Talbot Arms and left some pills for Cook, which were given to Palmer. The latter administered some pills to the sick man—doubtless some that he had made himself, employing strychnine as one of the principal ingredients—and left him about eleven o'clock in a very comfortable condition.

Suddenly, about midnight, the women in the lower part of the house were aroused by the most fearful screams and exclamations of pain proceeding from Mr. Cook's room. Flying thither, they found the unfortunate man suffering the most intense agony. He was screaming, beating the bed and rolling wildly about, while his eyes seemed almost starting from his head. His arms were rubbed at his request and Palmer, who had gone to his own house, was quickly sent for. The latter told Cook that he would soon be better, and gave him an opiate and a couple of pills. The former was quickly rejected by the stomach, but the latter were not. After this the pain subsided somewhat and the patient became more tranquil.

A grain of strychnine is usually a fatal dose for a human being. Whether Cook had vomited some of the pills administered by his professed friend will never be known, but he still lived. Presumably he had used the three grains procured

from Newton, for about noon on Tuesday he repaired to the shop of a Rugeley druggist named Hawkings, a man with whom he had had no dealings for two years, and asked for two drachms of prussic acid. Whether he had any intention of using this fearful poison is, of course, unknown. While the clerk was putting this up for him, Newton, the young man from whom he had secured the three grains of strychnine, came into the shop. Palmer at once took him by the arm and led him into the street, where he talked with him about an inconsequential matter until another party came up and engaged Newton in conversation, when he reëntered the shop and called for six grains of strychnine, and a quantity of Batley's liquor of opium. With his two purchases he left the place.

Mr. Cook was entitled to receive the sum of £350, the stake money won by his horse Polestar at Shrewsbury, and on this Tuesday Palmer took steps to collect it by means of a check payable to himself and purporting to be signed by Cook. This check was not paid, the stake money not having been collected. He procured a man named Cheshire to write the body of this check, giving the following remarkable reason therefor: "Poor Cook is too ill to draw the check himself, and Messrs. Wetherby might know my handwriting."

Mr. Cook was in the habit of spending much of his leisure time with a Mr. Jones, a medical practitioner of Lutterworth, and on the day he went down to London Palmer wrote Mr. Jones a letter telling him that Cook was sick with a bilious attack, and asking him to come and see him. Mr. Jones arrived on Tuesday, and at once remarked that there were no symptoms of biliousness. "You should have seen him before," cried Palmer.

On Tuesday Palmer administered coffee and broth to the patient, with the customary results. That night the three medical men, Bamford, Jones and Palmer, were together in Cook's room, when the latter exclaimed: "Palmer, I'll have more medicine to-night; no more pills."

With this the doctors left the room together, and decided to tell Cook that a different kind of pills from the ones he had taken the preceding night would be prepared for him, and

that they would prove decidedly beneficial. Palmer went with Dr. Bamford to his surgery and saw him make up the pills, which he was to take back to the hotel. The task completed, Palmer asked the doctor to write the directions upon the box. This struck Bamford as a strange request, coming as it did from a medical man who was to himself administer the medicine, but he complied, and wrote upon the box: "Pills to be taken at bed-time."

Three-quarters of an hour elapsed between the time when Palmer left Bamford's surgery and when he reached the Talbot Arms. As soon as he came he administered two of the pills to the sick man, despite his objections, at the same time calling the attention of Dr. Jones to the writing on the box, remarking that it was extremely good for a man of eighty years. This struck Dr. Jones as peculiar, since he had never met Dr. Bamford until that day and was not interested in the subject of his handwriting. Beyond a doubt, the remark was made to emphasize the fact that the pills, which he hoped would end the life of the man he called his friend, had been put up by Dr. Bamford.

Dr. Jones went downstairs, and had some supper, after which he went to bed. According to his testimony on the trial, Cook was much better when he left him that night than he had found him in the morning. A few minutes after retiring he heard Cook calling loudly for the doctor, declaring that he was in the same condition he had been in on the previous night. Jones found the patient suffering intense pain, gasping for breath and screaming violently. His body was convulsed, and his neck began to stiffen. Palmer was summoned from his house, and came so quickly as to almost give the lie to his statement that he had been in bed. Palmer brought some pills, which he told Dr. Jones were ammonia, and these Cook swallowed, though he failed to retain them. He wished to be raised up, but this was found to be impossible, his whole body being so stiffened and bowed from the terrible cramps from which he was suffering. Then he asked to be turned over. This was done, and he seemed to become easier, and after a few minutes quietly expired.

The murderer's presence of mind did not desert him. He asked Jones to go and call the female servants. They recommended two women to lay out the remains, and when these came a few minutes later, they saw Palmer searching under the dead man's pillow and under the bolster. They also saw him search the pockets of Mr. Cook's coat. When Cook came to Rugeley he was known to have had upon his person over £700 in notes, but none of this was afterwards found, nor could his betting-book be discovered. Beyond a doubt the prisoner took these, together with a number of letters.

That William Palmer was a man possessed of considerable executive ability and capable of exerting great influence over those with whom he came in contact, will scarcely be doubted by those who have read this brief account of his dealings with John Parsons Cook. From brokers, betting men, druggists and others, he secured favors and concessions, while he walked through the Talbot Arms at Rugeley as if he were its licensed landlord. Palmer was an audacious man, and his very audacity saved him, for a long time, from actual arrest, if not from suspicion. Two or three instances illustrating this power of the poisoner may be presented as forming a necessary part of the narrative.

On the Sunday following Mr. Cook's death, Palmer went to Dr. Bamford and asked for a certificate as to the cause of his demise. "Why do you ask that of me?" replied the doctor. "He was your patient." "I would rather you gave the certificate," answered Palmer, and after a little further talk Bamford consented to do this, and actually wrote out and delivered to Palmer a document giving apoplexy as the cause of John Parson Cook's death, though he must have well known, despite the infirmities of age, that such was not the case.

The young drug clerk, Charles Newton, appears to have been under the influence of Palmer. He proved a most important witness for the Crown, but not until the day before the opening of the trial did he make known to the authorities the fact that Palmer had secured three grains of strychnine from him. On the day when the poisoner

obtained the certificate of death Newton saw him in his house, and Palmer asked him what dose of strychnine would kill a dog; to which Newton replied that a grain would. The anxious murderer, who evidently wished to fortify his own opinion with that of another, then asked whether it could be found in the stomach after death, and what would be the appearance of the stomach. Newton replied that he thought no strychnine would be found and that there would be no inflammation. In response to this statement of opinion, Palmer expressed decided pleasure, and snapped his fingers.

At the post-mortem, a number of medical men, including Palmer, were present, and the latter made an ineffectual effort to carry away the sealed jar containing the dead man's stomach, after making various suggestions as to the diseases from which Cook had long been suffering, and which must have led to his death. The conduct of the poisoner had been such as to cause him to fall under suspicion, though no steps were taken to secure his arrest. It seems certain, from memoranda found in some of his medical books, and for other reasons, that Palmer had made a close study of the effect of strychnine on the human system, and that he believed that he had administered the poison so skilfully that none of it would be found in the stomach or other organs of his victim. At the inquest, before any charge had been made against him by any one, he exclaimed: "We shall not hang yet."

After the inquest the viscera was sent down to London for chemical analysis, and the murderer was naturally exceedingly anxious to learn in advance of the inquest the results obtained by the examining chemists. To accomplish this he called upon Samuel Cheshire, the man who had written the check purporting to have been signed by Cook, while the latter was sick. Cheshire was, and for eight years had been, the post-master at Rugeley, and Palmer induced him to open a letter written by Dr. Taylor, who had charge of the analysis for the Crown, to Mr. Gardiner, a solicitor. Cheshire opened the letter, and read a portion of it to Palmer, announcing that the chemists had found no trace of strychnine in the viscera submitted to them. For this crime Cheshire was indicted and

found guilty. He was brought from prison to testify against Palmer upon the latter's trial.

A Mr. Stephens, Cook's stepfather, appears to have been the first one to entertain suspicion against Palmer. He came to Rugeley immediately after his stepson's death, and was greatly surprised that the dead man's betting-book had not been found. Directly after Cook's death, Palmer made the claim that he was indebted to him in the sum of £4,000, the proceeds of bills that had been discounted, and presented Cheshire with a statement, purporting to bear the murdered man's signature, attesting such to be the fact. This signature Palmer endeavored to get Cheshire to attest by affixing his own name to the document. To this the postmaster, who was not wholly depraved, though by no means an upright man, exclaimed: "Good God! the man is dead! I should not like to attest the signature of a man who is dead. If such a transaction should come out and I should have to give evidence of it, I should not like the position."

Receiving this reply, Palmer announced that it was a matter of small consequence, since the signature was all right, and took the paper away.

As a result of the inquest, which was not concluded until December 5th, Palmer was taken into custody. Before that time he had paid Pratt two sums on account, of £100 each, but another party, to whom he owed over-due bills, had caused him to be arrested for the debt, and had also proceeded against his mother on her supposed endorsement, which brought to light the poisoner's long list of forgeries.

In January, 1856, the body of Cook was exhumed and an examination made of the spinal cord. At that time the most unnatural rigidity of the lower limbs and muscles, which had been apparent at and before death, continued, the feet and hands being positively distorted. It may be mentioned that the women who laid out the body had found it necessary to bind the arms to the sides of the body with tape. These facts told heavily against the defense set up by the prisoner.

The trial of William Palmer, which began in the Old Bailey on May 14, 1856, and continued for two weeks—an

unusual time for a murder trial in England—was one of the most memorable in the history of Great Britain. Lord Campbell presided, Mr. Justice Cresswell and Mr. Baron Alderson sitting with him, en banc. For the Crown, the attorney-general appeared in person, assisted by Mr. James, Q. C., Mr. Bodkin, Mr. Welsby and Mr. Huddleson. Mr. Serjeant Shee, one of the most eminent lawyers of the English bar, appeared for Palmer, and was ably assisted by Mr. Grove, Q. C., Mr. Gray, and Mr. Kinneally.

The defense was that Mr. Cook had died of tetanus, the symptoms of which are decidedly similar to those of poisoning by strychnine. It is impossible to enter at length into this matter, yet it is necessary, even for a slight discussion of it, to say something of the nature of strychnine.

Strychnine is a product from the seeds of Strychnos Nux Vomica, or poison nut, which come from the East Indies. It acts immediately and powerfully upon the nerves and muscles of the human body, and almost all forms of animal life. The attorney general, one of the most learned and eminent Englishmen of his time, spoke as follows of this fearful poison, and his position was sustained by a large number of medical experts:

"Now, the way in which, acting on the voluntary muscles, strychnine is fatal to life is this: It produces the most intense excitement of all these muscles, violent convulsions take place, spasms which affect the whole muscles of the body; these, after a series of convulsive throes, end in rigidity—all the muscles become, after fearful cramps, fixed, and especially the respiratory, within which the lungs have their play, are fixed with rigidity. By that means respiration is prevented and death necessarily ensues. The symptoms are known to medical men under the term of tetanus, that is to say, convulsive motions of the muscles. Under that form of tetanus you have the utmost rigidity produced—convulsions followed by rigidity, the legs distended, the feet curved out of their natural position, the muscles of the chest fixed, the muscles of the back, which hold the head in its erect position, forced back by the intensity of their excited retention, the head is thrown

back and the body assumes the form of a bow, resting on the back of the head and the heels. That is the form from which death arises from strychnine.

"It is, at the same time, right to say that tetanus, producing death, arises from other causes; but there are characteristic differences which, I believe, prevent the possibility of a mistake to those who are connected with this department of science. There is what is called tromatic tetanus, from the Greek word "tromos," signifying a wound. You have often heard of lockjaw arising from a cut, or the ulceration of some part of the body. There is also what is called idiopathic tetanus, which, as arising from disease, generally from sudden chill, produces this state of rigor of the muscular system; but there is the most marked difference between them."

The defense upon which Mr. Serjeant Shee principally relied was that John Parsons Cook had died a perfectly natural death, of idiopathic tetanus. An attempt was made to convince the jury that the symptoms developed by Mr. Cook just before his death, and the night preceding his demise, were those to be expected in a case where death had resulted from tetanus from disease.

Expert witnesses, summoned to testify in a great trial, seldom disappoint the parties responsible for their attendance. In one respect this might well be expected, since the views of the witness are always obtained before he is brought before the jury. But the expert witness always goes beyond this point and exerts himself to sustain the position of the party who has given him an opportunity to show his knowledge in court. Without being necessarily dishonest, he parades those points favorable to his side of the case, and suppresses or avoids those calculated to make to the interests of the opposition. In the author's observation expert testimony can always be produced to establish any theory not absolutely ridiculous and self-condemning on its face.

Renowned experts met and clashed in this memorable case. For the Crown the following well-known medical men and chemists were sworn: Thomas Blizzard Curling, Dr. Robert Todd, Henry Daniel, Samuel Solly, Henry Lee, Dr. Robert

Corbett, Dr. James Patterson, Dr. Alfred Taylor, Dr. George Owen Rees, William Thomas Brande, Prof. Robert Christison, and Dr. John Jackson. The defense introduced as experts Thomas Nunneley, William Herepath, Julian E. D. Rogers, Dr. Henry Letheby, Robert Edward Gay, John Brown Ross, Rivers Maratill, Dr. Francis Wrightson, Richard Partridge, John Gay, Dr. William McDonald, Dr. John Nathan Bainbridge, Edward Austin Steady, Dr. George Robinson, Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson, and Oliver Pemberton.

These long lists of men, including many of the most illustrious physicians and chemists of Great Britain, and their conflicting testimony aroused the metropolis, the entire nation, to a pitch of almost unprecedented excitement. Dr. Alfred Taylor, a physician of great note and the author of a standard work on poisons, had made an analysis of the stomach, intestines, liver, spleen and kidneys of John Parsons Cook. In this he was assisted by Dr. George Owen Rees, and the work was submitted to Prof. William Thomas Brande, a very eminent London chemist.

These experts found quite a quantity of antimony, but, although employing every test known to chemical science, not a trace of strychnine, a point that was used with great force by the defense. It was the general theory of the Crown that the strychnine that caused the death could not be recovered and identified as such, but only such strychnine as remained in the body, or rather, the excess above that required to produce death. In accordance with this theory the circumstance that no strychnine was found in the remains of Mr. Cook did not warrant the conclusion that he had not died of strychnine poisoning, but rather that it had been skilfully administered. Messrs. Taylor and Rees had killed four rabbits with small doses of strychnine, and, in three out of the four, had been unable to discover a trace of strychnine by the most painstaking chemical analysis. This position was fortified by the testimony of several other of the Crown's witnesses, though combated by the defense.

In the past forty years considerable advance has been made in the science of analytical chemistry, but it is still

impossible to absolutely determine by chemical analysis whether a person has died of strychnine poisoning, though the chances of establishing the fact are much greater than formerly. What is known as a physiological test is at present employed to detect the presence of strychnine in a corpse where analysis has failed to indicate its presence. A portion of the liver, kidneys and other parts of the body most likely to retain the poison, is reduced to a fluid state and a little of it injected into the circulation of a frog. The nerves and muscles of frogs are peculiarly sensitive and the smallest possible portion of strychnine will induce twitchings and spasmodic contractions of the muscles. At present, as in 1856, the thing chiefly relied upon to prove death from strychnine poisoning is the physical conditions under which the subject died.

It was this that sent William Palmer to the scaffold. Tetanus as the result of disease is continuous, while John Parsons Cook recovered from one severe attack to die the following night of another. Idiopathic tetanus, of which the defense claimed Mr. Cook died, takes some time, generally several days, to develop, and none of the expert witnesses for the defense knew of a case where death had ensued within the space of a few hours. Mr. Cook died within an hour from the time when he was the second time seized with muscular convulsions. Again, he had been able to swallow, shortly before death, a thing almost impossible in natural tetanus, while the distorted hands and feet, the bowed body and the general extreme rigidity of the muscles spoke loudly of strychnine.

Many witnesses for the defense were quite positive that Mr. Cook had died a natural death, but common sense, leaving science out of the question, was against them. All the organs of his body were found in a healthy condition, there being absolutely nothing upon which to predicate death except the administration of a subtle vegetable poison, which had been so completely absorbed as to defy science to prove its presence in the dead body.

William Palmer did not undertake his work blindly, but exercised an almost devilish ingenuity. The administration

of antimony—doubtless in the form of tartar emetic—was for a two-fold purpose. In the first place, it produced a violent illness which, the cause being unknown, was well calculated to disarm suspicion when it terminated fatally. Secondly, the weakening effect of continual vomiting and consequent neglect of food could not but render the body of the unfortunate man more susceptible to the effects of strychnine, thus permitting Palmer to take his life with comparatively small doses, which lessened—as the sequel showed—the chance of the examining chemists finding any of the poison in his remains.

But for the numerous detailed incriminating actions of Palmer, it is doubtful if he could have ever been convicted; as it was, it took the jury only a little more than two hours to settle his fate. Palmer refused to say anything in his own defense, and was, on May 27, 1856, formally sentenced to death by Lord Campbell. For the sake of the example upon the community, he was removed from Newgate to the county of Stafford, and was there executed a few days later.

As already stated, the trial of William Palmer is still the leading case in criminal jurisprudence where the charge of strychnine poisoning is set up. In all such cases, while the finding of strychnine in the remains is very important, the circumstances attending the death are all paramount, since no known disease produces symptoms that correspond exactly to those induced by the product of the deadly nux vomica.

CHAPTER XXIII

H. H. HOLMES, THE MULTI-MURDERER

As a rule, theories are constructed with reference to existing cases, which are often distorted, frequently misstated, to match the vagaries or extravagant ideas of the author or lecturer. But true theories, well founded and logically worked out, seldom long lack confirmation. Many scientists, astronomers in particular, have lived to see their abstract theories amply demonstrated by indisputable facts. The theory of homicidal impulse advanced, or rather suggested, by the author, is founded upon many well-defined cases, which seem to quite clearly establish its truth. Since the bulk of the present volume was written, two instances have arisen in this country, or rather have been brought to a termination, which seem to go far toward demonstrating the validity of the position that there is such a thing as an inherent disposition to take human life. One of these, the Hayward case, is set forth at length in another chapter. The other, which is much more striking, supporting the suggestion of homicidal impulse as pointedly as though it were a bit of fiction written for that one purpose, forms the subject-matter of the present chapter.

The case of Herman Webster Mudgett, better known under his principal alias of H. H. Holmes, is almost unique in the annals of crime. The present volume, which deals with the murderous work of the most diabolical villains who have, in different ages of the world, disgraced the name of man, contains no instance at all comparable with that of this wretch, who took a fiendish delight in causing the cruel death of his fellow creatures, and died believing that he was fast assuming the physical form of his master, the devil. According to his own confession, Holmes (the wretch will be so designated in

the present narrative) not only murdered men, women and innocent children, from mingled motives of cupidity and the gratification of his murderous impulse, but, failing more lucrative employment in the domain of crime, imitated Burke and Hare, and killed people that he might sell their bodies for purposes of dissection. Aside from being a multi-murderer, Holmes committed enough other crimes to render his name infamous. He was a bigamist, horse thief, forger, defrauder of life insurance companies and general all-around swindler. And yet for years this human monstrosity came in almost daily contact with bright, discerning people, with whom he usually passed as an honest man and a good fellow. The entire realm of fiction contains little that is more extravagant, cruel and morbid than the actual life of H. H. Holmes.

It was through the famous Pitezel case that the manifold murders of Holmes were discovered and made public. Many of them were ferreted out by detectives and clearly established, but the crimes of the wretch far outnumbered the wildest estimates of those who had formed the best ideas of his character, and believed him capable of committing any conceivable act of cruelty. The full enormity of his offenses he published to the world in a confession, written by him in prison about a month before his execution. This confession was published in a large number of newspapers in different parts of the country, and brought him a considerable sum of money, $10,000, it is said. In this statement Holmes confessed to having committed twenty-seven different murders. He delighted in taking human life and watching the suffering of his victims, as clearly appears from his own statements. Next to this he seems to have derived his greatest pleasure from devising and giving utterance to ingeniously constructed, plausible falsehoods.

In the domain of fabrication Herman Webster Mudgett, alias H. H. Holmes, is entitled to a very high place. With him lying assumed the form of an art, and, until his real character was laid bare, his manifold lies readily passed current, and to this, in a large measure at least, his wonderful success in so long concealing his crimes must be attributed. After his

arrest he told many different stories, modifying them as the discovery of the facts by the authorities compelled him to do. At first the detectives placed considerable reliance upon his confessions and believed that he had "made a clean breast" of everything; but as time passed his ability as an artistic liar began to dawn upon them, and they came to distrust and finally disbelieve everything he said. It has been shown that he told some falsehoods in the confession he furnished the press while awaiting execution, yet it is believed that it was true in the main. His object in exaggerating doubtless was to enhance the value of the manuscript, and at the same time feed his inordinate thirst for notoriety. The Pitezel case thus forms the logical starting-point for an account of the criminal career of this wretch, who may well be classed among the most cruel and murderous of all who have disgraced the image of the Divine Being in which they were created.

Were it not for the circumstance that this remarkable case is of but recent origin, and many of the facts fresh in the public mind, it would almost be necessary to explain that the present narrative is not fiction, but fact; not the invention of a second Edgar A. Poe, but the true story of the wicked deeds of a man fertile in invention and resources, possessed of nerves of steel and a heart as hard and cold as a stone. The life of this man served but one good purpose; it furnishes a frightful example of the depths to which thirst for gold and blood—cupidity and the homicidal impulse—will sometimes reduce those who yield themselves up to the spirit of evil.

"B. F. PERRY, PATENTS BOUGHT AND SOLD."

In the latter part of August, 1894, this legend, painted on a sheet of muslin, and displayed in front of the windows of a house known as No. 1316 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, caught the eye of a passer-by. This was a carpenter and inventor named Eugene Smith. He had recently patented a saw-set, which had so far proved buried capital. Here was his opportunity, and he lost no time in entering the house, a red brick structure of two and a half stories, and broaching his business to the proprietor, a tall, raw-boned man. Perry wished to see a model of the device, and Smith called with it

the following day. Learning that Smith was a carpenter, Perry employed him to construct a rough counter in the store. While at work on this a man entered, made a sign to the proprietor and passed upstairs, closely followed by the latter. This visitor, who was evidently entirely familiar with the premises, Smith afterwards identified as H. H. Holmes, his testimony forming one of the strongest links in the chain which dragged the inhuman scoundrel to the scaffold.

But Smith was destined to cut a more important figure in the tragedy that was then taking form. His work done, the carpenter departed, but returned on the afternoon of Monday, September 3d. He came then in his capacity of inventor, to ascertain what was being done about the sale of his patent. He found the door unlocked and the store deserted. Thinking Perry would soon return, he seated himself and waited with the best patience he could command. After a time he grew weary and quitted the place, but not until he had hallooed for the proprietor, without receiving any response. Early the next morning he returned, and found the place exactly as he had left it; the door was unlocked, and the apartment, including some articles of clothing that he had particularly noticed on the preceding day, exactly as he had left it. He called aloud the name Perry several times, and, receiving no response, passed through the store and ascended the stairs. In a back room, lying on the floor, with the face badly disfigured, was the decomposing body of a man. Losing no time, he repaired to the nearest police-station, and gave the alarm. Two officers at once hurried to the scene, calling on their way for a physician, Dr. Scott.

They found the body in a very natural and peaceful posture. It was rigid and straight, the right arm resting across the breast, and this notwithstanding the circumstance that the body was badly burned. The left arm lay close to the body, and the inner portion of it was not burned. The mustache on one side was burned off. The clothing was the same, to all appearances, that Smith had seen Perry wear, and there was little doubt but what the dead man was he. On either side of the body lay fragments of a large broken bottle, a pipe

filled with tobacco, and a burnt match. There were evidences that an explosion had taken place, though pieces of the glass were found within the bottle, as would not have been the case if it had burst. The stomach showed alcoholic irritation, and emitted an odor of chloroform. The coroner's physician testified that death had been caused by chloroform poisoning, though the verdict of the jury left it an open question whether death had resulted from poison or inhalation of the flame. The case presented a veritable mystery on its face, and the police were divided as to whether or not the man had committed suicide, no one suggesting that he had met with foul play. The body of Perry, as the coroner's jury had decided the dead man to be, lay unclaimed in the morgue for eleven days, and was then buried in the potter's field.

Before the burial, however, the officers of the Fidelity Mutual Life Association and the coroner received letters from a young attorney of St. Louis, named Jeptha D. Howe, stating that he represented the wife of one Benjamin F. Pitezel, whose life was insured in said company for $10,000. He stated that the man found dead at No. 1316 Callowhill street, was really Pitezel, who had been known as B. F. Perry. He concluded by saying that he would soon be in Philadelphia with witnesses to identify the body and claim the insurance. According to the company's books such a policy had been issued in Chicago, and an inquiry was at once forwarded to that office.

At this juncture Holmes appears upon the scene. The cashier of the Chicago office, knowing that Holmes was acquainted with Pitezel, went to Wilmette, a suburb of Chicago, to interview him. He was absent, but his wife offered to write him about the matter. It may be mentioned here that Holmes had two other wives living, and was not legally married to the one domiciled in Wilmette, although she was ignorant of the fact, and of his villainy as well. Mr. Cass, the cashier of the Chicago office, gave her a clipping from a Chicago paper, which stated that the body had been found in Chicago. On September 17th Holmes wrote Cass a letter from Indianapolis, which was simply wonderful in its ingenuity. He stated that he knew Pitezel quite well, and

gave an accurate description of him. He offered to come to Chicago, to identify the body, provided his expenses were paid, as he was not in good circumstances. Two days later he wrote Mr. Cass a second letter, in which he stated that he had learned from the Philadelphia papers that the body had been found in that city. He said he was going to Baltimore, and would call at the company's office in Philadelphia in a few days.

September 20th he called upon Mr. Fouse, president of the insurance company in Philadelphia, and was informed of the verdict. The following day Jeptha D. Howe called upon Mr. Fouse and presented a letter of introduction from R. J. Linden, superintendent of police of Philadelphia, which he had secured on the strength of a letter from a St. Louis party. He also produced a power of attorney from Mrs. Pitezel. He explained that some financial complications had induced Pitezel to pass under an assumed name. In the afternoon of the same day he brought Alice, Pitezel's daughter, a girl of about fifteen, to the office, explaining that Mrs. Pitezel was sick and unable to come. She corroborated the description already given by Holmes and Howe. In answer to a question, Howe stated that he did not know Holmes. As a matter of fact this was false, Holmes having secured the services of Howe, who seems to have been in the conspiracy to defraud the company. At this most opportune moment Holmes came into the office and was introduced to Howe as a gentleman who had known Pitezel for years. The two shook hands and addressed each other as if meeting for the first time.

Mr. Fouse then suggested that, as the body was to be disinterred, marks of identification should be agreed upon. This was done, a cut on the leg, a wart on the neck, a bruised thumb-nail, and certain peculiarities of the teeth being suggested and noted down. The following day, September 22d, the body was disinterred and identified, Holmes pointing out the distinctive marks. After a consultation, the officers of the company agreed that the identification was complete, and on the Monday following paid over to Howe $9,715.85, the amount of the policy less the expenses of identification. The

company paid Holmes ten dollars to defray his expenses in coming from Baltimore, and the second act in the great tragedy was over.

"Like vaulting ambition," greed often o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side. H. H. Holmes had brutally killed Benjamin F. Pitezel, which was very far from being the first of his murderous deeds. As will hereafter appear, the scheme invented and carried into effect by Holmes was simply devilish in its ingenuity, but it had one very weak point. Marion C. Hedgepeth, confined in the city prison of St. Louis on a charge of train-robbery, knew of the plan to defraud the insurance company by presenting proofs of the pretended death of B. F. Pitezel. In July, 1894, Holmes had been confined in the same prison on a charge of swindling, a predicament from which he soon escaped. While there he formed the acquaintance of Hedgepeth. There is a fellow-feeling between almost all criminals, and besides, Hedgepeth was notorious, which seems to have led Holmes to trust him. At any rate, he unfolded his scheme for defrauding the Fidelity Mutual Life Association out of $10,000. He told the robber that the only thing he lacked was a lawyer who could be trusted to act in the matter, and offered to give Hedgepeth $500 if he would secure him one. As the robber badly needed that amount to obtain his release, he sent for his attorney, J. D. Howe, whom he introduced to Holmes, after which an understanding was reached. Howe claimed that he went into the transaction for the purpose of securing funds to use in the interest of his client, Hedgepeth, in whom he was much interested.

As already detailed, Howe secured the money, of which he retained $2,500 as his fee; Holmes secured about $7,000, $5,000 of which he made Mrs. Pitezel believe he had paid to take up a note of her husband, while the widow was given about $400. In the meantime, Holmes conveniently forgot to pay the imprisoned train-robber the promised $500, and the lawyer took no active steps to obtain his release. About two weeks after the money was paid over to Howe, Hedgepeth wrote Major Lawrence Harrigan, chief of the St. Louis police,

a letter in which he betrayed the whole plan. He was familiar with the affair, and told a straight story. He stated that Howe had called upon him in the prison after his return from Philadelphia, and told him all the particulars, even to the circumstance that Holmes had telegraphed the premium to the Chicago office of the company on the very last day it would have been received. The prisoner was indignant at the treatment he had received, hence the disclosures. Thus a breach of faith on the part of the astute Holmes, a failure to live up to the old maxim touching honor among thieves, led to his undoing.

Inspector Gary of the Philadelphia police happened to be in St. Louis on business, and the matter was at once brought to his attention. He called upon Hedgepeth, and secured his statement in the form of an affidavit. The officers of the insurance company in Philadelphia placed no reliance upon the disclosure, but Gary was satisfied that the man had told the truth. He ascertained that the premium had been telegraphed just as he had said, and this was a strong confirmation, since how could he have learned the circumstance except in the manner he claimed? The inspector finally persuaded the officers of the company to make an investigation. Holmes was traced from place to place, and was finally located and placed under surveillance. He was shadowed to Boston, where he was arrested November 17, 1894. The charge upon which he was apprehended was horse-stealing in Texas. Seeing one of the officers of the insurance company at the police-station, he suggested that he was probably wanted in Philadelphia instead of Texas. As a matter of fact he feared the summary justice frequently meted out to people who make mistakes about the ownership of horses in the Lone Star State, and had no mind to be taken there.

Secured in the Boston police-station, the fertile brain of the swindler-murderer began to evolve lies, and he made a statement on November 19th. He was examined at great length, and the following points, among many others, were elicited: He admitted that he and Pitezel had conspired to swindle the insurance company. He had secured a body in New York, from parties whose names he refused to divulge, and taken it to

Philadelphia in a trunk, the check of which he had given to Pitezel. He next saw him in Cincinnati some two weeks after the insurance money had been paid over. Holmes had taken three of Pitezel's children to Detroit, and their father had seen them there, against his advice, which enhanced the dangers of the plot being discovered. Holmes put Pitezel into a trunk, which he himself lifted into the back of a buggy, and drove out of the city, when he released the occupant. They were both involved in trouble at Fort Worth, Texas, and had reason to fear that officers were upon their track. Holmes took the children out to Pitezel, and that was the last he saw of any of them. He believed that they were in South America, as it had been agreed that they should go there. He had telegraphed to Mrs. Pitezel, who was with her parents at Galva, Ill., to go to Chicago and from there to Detroit. After Pitezel had seen his children he was fearful to have them meet their mother, lest the secret might reach the ears of outsiders through their talk. He begged Holmes to keep her in the dark as to his and their whereabouts for a time, which he undertook to do. On this journey Mrs. Pitezel was accompanied by her daughter Dessie, a girl of eighteen, and a young baby. Holmes admitted that he had taken the woman and her children from place to place in Canada and New England, constantly promising to unite her to her husband and the other three children. This policy was pursued until they were arrested in Boston, for Mrs. Pitezel had been apprehended at the same time. During all these wanderings, Holmes was accompanied by Miss Yoke, who believed herself to be his wife, yet she never met Mrs. Pitezel, nor knew anything about her presence, though they were often stopping in close proximity to each other.

The reader will not need to be told that, for the most part, all this was a tissue of lies. B. F. Pitezel was dead. Until October 25, 1894, Holmes was traveling with a party of seven, divided into three detachments: himself and wife; Mrs. Pitezel, Dessie and the baby; the two other Pitezel girls, Nellie and Alice. The boy, Howard, he had already murdered at Irvington, a suburb of Indianapolis.

On November 20, 1894, Holmes and Mrs. Pitezel were taken to Philadelphia, they having consented to go without the formality of a requisition. On the way Holmes assured Dessie that her father was alive, and that she would soon see him. He told the officers that Pitezel had done his work in a very bungling manner, and laughed as he talked about it. Howe was brought from St. Louis. In due time Holmes, Pitezel and Mrs. Carrie Pitezel were indicted for conspiracy to defraud.

As time passed on Mrs. Pitezel, who was confined in the county prison, became quite communicative, and gave the authorities many clues that promised to develop into something tangible and aid in locating her husband and children. But nothing came of them, although they were carefully followed out, and the authorities began to believe that the body of Pitezel, and not a substitute, lay buried in the potter's field. In the meantime, Holmes had ample time for reflection, and evidently employed it to good advantage. One thing that occurred shortly after his commitment to the prison must have greatly disturbed him. Inspector Perry asked him who helped him put the body in the trunk in New York City. To which Holmes replied, that he did it alone, a trick he had learned at Ann Arbor. The inspector then asked him the following question, to which he made no answer: "Can you tell me where I can find a medical man or a medical authority, which will instruct me how to re-stiffen a body after *rigor mortis* has once been broken?"

On December 27, 1894, Holmes sent for R. J. Linden, Esq., superintendent of police of the Department of Public Safety of Philadelphia. He promptly acknowledged that he had lied in his statement made in Boston, and volunteered to make a new one which should be strictly true. This he dictated to a stenographer. He said, in brief, that the plot to defraud the insurance company had been arranged by Pitezel and himself in the fall of 1893, and that Mrs. Pitezel was not informed of it until July, 1894. He told of meeting Hedgepeth in the St. Louis jail, and how, through him, he became acquainted with Howe. He admitted that he had promised to

give Hedgepeth $300 of the proceeds. He and Pitezel went to New York, where they arranged the details of the scheme. Pitezel then went to Philadelphia, where he rented the house No. 1316 Callowhill street, which he fitted up to bear out the claim that he was a dealer in patents. Holmes was also in Philadelphia, though stopping at a different place. September 1st Pitezel told Holmes that his baby was sick, and that he would have to go home, at the same time asking him for money. It was arranged that Holmes should go in his place. The next day, which was Sunday, Holmes repaired to the Callowhill house. It was about half-past ten in the morning when he called and admitted himself by the aid of a key which he carried. Not finding Pitezel he went out, but returned about noon. After reading a morning paper for a while, he went to his desk, where he found a paper upon which was written in cipher: "Get letter out of bottle in cupboard." He secured the letter, which informed him that he would find Pitezel, the writer, dead upstairs, if he could manage to kill himself. On the third floor he found the dead body of the man he sought. He had died from chloroform poisoning. He carried the body down to the second floor and arranged it as it was found by Smith. This was done about three o'clock in the afternoon. To carry out the programme that had been previously arranged, he took a hammer and broke a bottle containing benzine, chloroform and ammonia; this was to convey the idea that an explosion had occurred. He then poured some of the fluid over the body, and set fire to it. Having arranged matters to his satisfaction, he went to his lodgings, reaching there about five p. m. He at once packed up his effects, and, accompanied by his wife, who was ill, left the city that night for St. Louis.

Learning from a St. Louis paper of Wednesday that the body had been discovered, he looked up Mrs. Pitezel and family, who were in St. Louis. They had seen the report, and the children were much distressed, though the mother was not, as she supposed that the original plan of substitution had been carried into effect. That night he saw Howe, and arranged with him to collect the insurance. Howe did not

suppose that the body was that of Pitezel. He explained that Pitezel had taken the chloroform through a tube connected with a bottle. These Holmes carried away with him. He stated that he had given the three children to a Miss Minnie Williams, and that they were then with her in London, England.

After this statement was made, George S. Graham, the district attorney, interviewed the prisoner. He told him that he strongly suspected that he had not only murdered Pitezel, but the three children as well, and called upon him to give information that would aid the authorities in locating the latter, if they were alive. Holmes answered that he last saw Howard in Detroit, when he gave him into the keeping of Miss Williams, who took him to Buffalo. Shortly after this he took Alice and Nellie to Toronto, and a few days later, put them on a train for Niagara Falls, where Miss Williams was to meet them. He thoughtfully pinned $400 in large bills in Nellie's dress, that the party might not lack for money. At New York City, he said, Miss Williams had dressed Nellie in boy's clothes, to throw any inquiring detectives off the track, after which the four had gone to London.

The scoundrel, who, the reader will not need be informed, was constructing lies out of the whole cloth, told Mr. Graham that he and Miss Williams had agreed upon a cipher for use in communicating and that an advertisement so written, published in the New York *Sunday Herald*, would be certain to meet her eye, as she would be looking for it. The cipher was as follows:

REPUBLICAN republican

CbepBc

ABCDEFGHIJ klmnopqrstuvwxyz. Thus

Holmes.

In the New York *Herald* of Sunday, June, 2, 1895, an article appeared commenting upon the Holmes-Pitezel case, while the following advertisement was inserted in the personal column:

"Minnie Williams, Adele Covelle, Geraldine Wanda.—AplbenRun nb CBRc EBLbrB 10th PREeB a Bnucu PCAe-

UcBu RubuPB. Also write pk PRaaAB cbepBa. Address, George S. Graham, City Hall, Philadelphia, Penn., U. S. A."

This cipher would have conveyed to Miss Williams, who, by the way, Holmes had murdered some time before, the following message: "Important to hear before 10th. Cable. Return children at once. Also write Mr. Massie." Holmes had told Mr. Graham that Miss Williams had opened a massage establishment in London at No. 80 Veder or Vadar Street, but a cable inquiry established the fact that there were no such streets in London.

Minnie and Nannie Williams were two sisters whose sudden disappearance had excited attention. They were last seen in the company of Holmes, and it was now suspected that they had met with foul play at his hands. A piece of real estate which they owned at Fort Worth, Texas, was found to have been conveyed to Benjamin F. Pitezel, under the alias of Benton T. Lyman, from whom it had passed into the possession of Holmes. That scoundrel had told a most improbable story to the effect that Minnie Williams had killed her sister in a moment of rage, and that he, to shield her, had sunk the body in Lake Michigan. The authorities believed that the three Pitezel children had been murdered, but this story of sinking the body in the lake had left them little hope of ever finding their remains, since he was quite likely to have carried his lying theory into practice when occasion presented. A bundle of letters written by Alice and Nettie Pitezel to their mother and grandparents, together with a number written by Mrs. Pitezel, in Detroit and Toronto, which had evidently been given to Holmes to post, were found in his possession when he was arrested, and furnished tangible clues as to the wanderings of the party after Holmes started out with them. Afterwards Mrs. Pitezel had, to all appearances, told everything she knew about the mystery, which, most unfortunately, was very little, and on June 19, 1895, she was set at liberty.

Both the authorities and the insurance company were now satisfied that Holmes was a murderer, and it was resolved that a systematic search be made for the missing children, the company supplying the necessary funds. The investigation

was placed in the hands of Frank P. Geyer, for twenty years a member of the Philadelphia detective bureau. The most important points of his long and remarkably clear investigation are presented, taken from a very comprehensive report of the great case, published by him after he had successfully completed his long and laborious investigation.

The detective was provided with photographs of Holmes, Pitezel, Alice, Nellie, Howard, Dessie, Mrs. Pitezel, and also of the trunk Holmes claimed to have used in getting Pitezel out of the city of Detroit, and the trunk the three children had with them. Thus equipped, he arrived in Cincinnati on June 27, 1895. He found that Holmes had been there on September 28, 1894, and had registered at a cheap hotel as "Alex. E. Cook and three children." It was learned that on that day he had rented a house, paying $15 in advance. The night of September 29th the party stopped at another hotel. Holmes partly furnished the house, but left after two days. Doubtless his plan was to murder the children there. As some of the children's letters were dated Indianapolis, Geyer went to that city. He found that "Etta Pitsel" had registered at the Stubbins House, September 24, 1894. By means of photographs, she was identified as Alice Pitezel. On September 28th, the clerk had placed her on a Cincinnati train. This was in compliance with a request from Holmes, who telegraphed from St. Louis under his common alias of Howard. Certain that the murderer had returned to Indianapolis, the detective continued his search. He finally discovered that, on October 1st, the "three Canning children, Galva, Illinois," had registered at the Hotel English. Beyond a doubt they were the Pitezel children. Geyer also discovered that Holmes' wife had been in the city from the 18th to the 24th of September, 1894, the time when Holmes was in Philadelphia identifying the body of Pitezel. From September 30th to October 4th, the woman was staying in a hotel within a hundred feet of the one where the children were, but knew nothing about their presence.

Geyer learned that Holmes had told a Mr. Ackelow, at whose hotel the children had stopped in Indianapolis, that

Howard was a bad boy and he wanted to put him in a reform-school. From this he had concluded that he had killed the boy. Receiving information from the insurance company that Holmes and the boy had been seen in Detroit, the detective started for that city. On the way he stopped at Chicago, and made a fruitless effort to locate the children's trunk, which Holmes claimed he had left at a hotel on West Madison street. While in Chicago he visited Holmes' famous "Castle" on Sixty-third street, and interviewed the janitor, Pat Quinlan, who was supposed to know a good deal about Holmes' villainy, but learned nothing about the children.

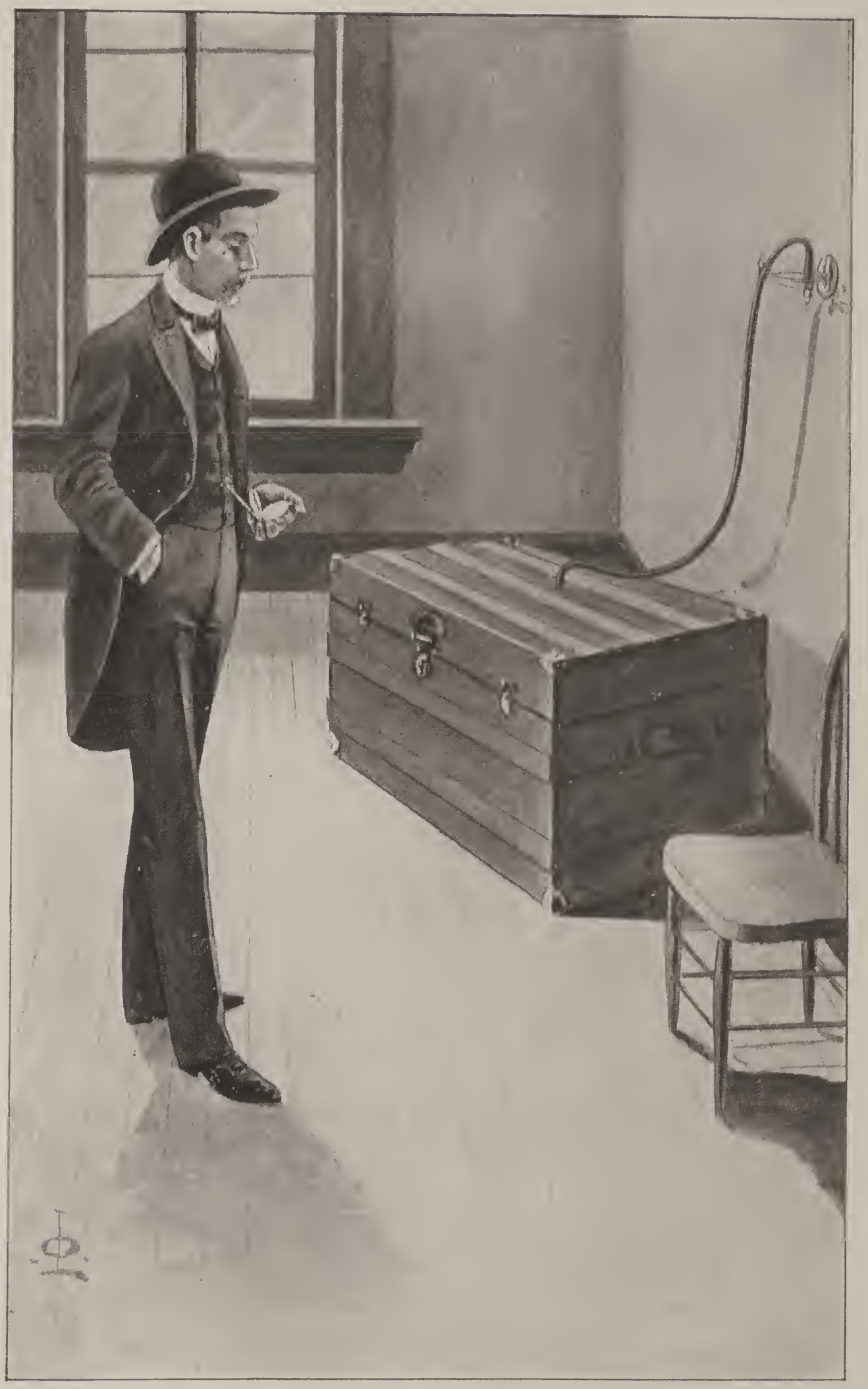
On the evening of July 4th the officer reached Detroit, and the next day began his investigations. He soon learned that Holmes had, about October 15, 1894, rented a house at 241 East Forest Avenue. He also found that the two girls had been at a hotel on the night of October 12th. When he rented the house, Holmes told the agent that he wanted it for a widowed sister with three children, who would soon be there. In the meantime, he found that Holmes and his wife had been at another hotel on the same day, under assumed names. An examination of the house Holmes had rented led to no important developments. After leaving the hotel, Holmes and his wife had stopped for four or five days at a boarding-house under their own names. At the same time, Mrs. Pitezel, Dessie and the baby had been stopping at a hotel in Detroit, subject to the orders of Holmes, who claimed that he was about to unite her to her husband and children. That H. H. Holmes possessed executive ability in addition to being a villain, none can doubt. In some manner, probably by playing upon their fears, the monster induced the children to remain in their room, and thus reduced the chance of a meeting with their mother to a minimum. On the 18th and 19th of October Holmes removed the three sections of his party to Toronto, where he domiciled them so that they did not meet. On the morning of July 8th Geyer arrived in Toronto, where he was destined to make horrible discoveries.

The detective was not long in finding the hotels at which Mrs. Pitezel and Holmes and wife had stopped upon their

arrival there, but some time elapsed before he encountered the legend upon a register: "Alice and Nellie Canning, Detroit." It was easily established that they were the two Pitezel girls. After much labor and many disappointments, Geyer finally located a house which Holmes had rented while the two missing girls were in Toronto. This was at No. 16 St. Vincent street. Inquiry and an exhibition of the photographs soon established the fact that Holmes and the girls had been there at the time. The only furniture brought to the house was an old bed, a mattress and large trunk. An old man living next door had loaned Holmes a spade. He said that a widowed sister of his was to occupy the house, and he wanted to arrange a place in which she could store potatoes. A place in the cellar was found where the earth seemed to have been recently disturbed, and, digging down to a depth of about three feet, the badly decomposed remains of the two unfortunate little girls were reached. Mrs. Pitezel was sent for and came at once, though she was almost in a state of collapse when she reached Toronto. She easily identified the remains, the clothing and some other articles, furnishing the most satisfactory basis for reaching the conclusion.

The boy, Howard, remained to be accounted for, and this presented the most difficult problem, since the detective had already covered the entire ground without coming any nearer solving the mystery than when he started.

There had been some evidence tending to establish the circumstance that a small boy, presumably Howard Pitezel, had been seen with Holmes in Detroit. After going carefully through it, however, the detective decided that it was a mistake. A letter written by Nellie while in Detroit contained the brief but significant phrase: "Howard is not with us now." There is something strangely pathetic about this. At the time it was written by one of the two lonely and homesick girls, their mother, older sister and baby brother were not more than a block away from them. Beyond a doubt the omission to mention where Howard and they had parted company was due to instructions on the part of Holmes, who probably told them that they would imperil their father's



H. H. HOLMES ASPHYXIATING THE PITEZEL GIRLS.—PAGE 428.

safety by explaining where Howard was, or where they had seen him last. Satisfied that Howard had not been brought to Detroit with the girls, the detective returned to Indianapolis.

Arriving there, he was given every possible assistance by the police, and received no end of suggestions and clues as to houses that had been rented about the time the boy had disappeared. Holmes seems to have had a mania for renting houses when he had dark deeds to transact, and it was fairly certain that he had followed his rule in disposing of Howard. For a long time there were no results; scores of clues were run down, but none of them developed anything. After the city had been exhausted, Geyer and his assistants began upon the suburbs. Before this last task was undertaken, the detective went to Chicago to run down some clues reported there, and then returned to Philadelphia to consult with the district attorney and others. Finally, in the latter part of August, he returned to Indianapolis, after having in vain searched several Indiana and Ohio towns. By August 27th every outlying town except Irvington, six miles from Indianapolis, had been searched without results. On that day the officers visited that beautiful suburb, and soon learned that a man answering the description of Holmes had rented a house there in October, 1894. Photographs of Holmes and Howard Pitezel were recognized by several people, and the officer felt that his long search was about to be rewarded.

On entering the house, a one and a half story cottage standing alone, the party at once descended to the cellar and began a systematic search. Nothing incriminating was found there, the floor, part of which was of cement and part of hard clay, not having been disturbed. Under a small piazza was found fragments of a trunk. This was soon identified as the one for which Geyer had so long been in search. In the barn, a large coal stove, called the "Peninsular Oak," was found, and some articles of furniture. On this stove, which was over forty inches high and some twenty-two inches in diameter, the detective found what he thought to be blood-stains. As a vast and curious crowd had collected, which interfered with the

search, it was abandoned for that day, and the investigating party returned to the city. Shortly after their arrival Dr. Barnhill, of Irvington, came to Indianapolis with something of the utmost importance. This consisted of a small package containing pieces of badly incinerated bone, which the doctor declared to be, as was subsequently fully established, portions of the skull and femur of a child, not over twelve years of age. Dr. Barnhill and his partner, Dr. Thompson, had continued the search after the detective's departure. Two small boys who were with them began operations on their own account, and, in a chimney-hole in the cellar, among a mass of ashes and soot, discovered the half-incinerated bones. Geyer at once returned to the house, broke a hole in the chimney, and carefully sifted its contents. He recovered almost a complete set of teeth, the pelvis of the body and a large charred mass which proved to be portions of the liver, stomach and spleen. Portions of the iron fastenings of the trunk were also discovered. A boy's coat, proven at the inquest to have belonged to Howard Pitezel, was found in the possession of a grocer, with whom Holmes had left it, saying that the boy would call for it, which he never did. The inquest was held next day, Mrs. Pitezel being present, and resulted in a verdict that the remains were those of Howard Pitezel, who had come to his death at the hands of H. H. Holmes.

H. H. Holmes was now in great demand. Toronto, Chicago and Indianapolis each claimed that they could convict him of murder. In Chicago the excitement had been intense. Police investigations indicated that a number of people associated with the monster had disappeared, but no really tangible evidence was secured upon which a prosecution for murder could be reasonably prosecuted Holmes was indicted in Philadelphia, in September, 1895, for the murder of Benjamin F. Pitezel. The case was set for trial October 28th following. When the day arrived Holmes' counsel made a desperate fight for a continuance, and failing to secure it, announced that the prisoner had discharged them from the case. The court ordered them to proceed, but they refused to do it, and left the court-room. Hon. Michael Arnold, the trial judge,

ordered the case to proceed, and Holmes assumed control of his own defense, examining jurors as to their fitness to try the case, with an ability that was quite remarkable. On the second day of the trial the two young attorneys who claimed they had been discharged returned and took charge of the prisoner's defense. Miss Yoke, Holmes' last wife, and Mrs. Pitezel were leading witnesses. During the entire trial the accused manifested the most remarkable coolness, amounting to apparent unconcern. He admitted that the body found at No. 1316 Callowhill Street was that of Pitezel, and the real question at issue was whether or not he had committed suicide. The evidence was clear and conclusive, though everything bearing on the murder of the Pitezel children was ruled out by the judge. The trial lasted less than a week, the defendant being, on October 28, 1895, found guilty of murder in the first degree. A motion for a new trial was refused, and on November 30, 1895, Herman Webster Mudgett, alias H. H. Holmes, was sentenced to death. On an appeal, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania refused to grant the condemned man a new trial, and the day of his execution was fixed for May 7, 1896.

Under the date of April 9, 1896, the condemned murderer gave out to the press the confession already referred to. It was quite voluminous, and, if printed in full, would cover some forty pages in the present volume. Doubt has been thrown upon some of the details given by Holmes. This was to have been expected; a man with his reputation for lying is not believed when he sees fit to tell the truth. Again, a man who has acquired and developed the "lying habit" to the extent Holmes did, finds it well-nigh impossible to adhere strictly to the truth. That he was a multi-murderer has been clearly proven, and there is no reason to believe that the detailed statement of his crimes was greatly exaggerated. This will impress the reader quite strongly when he reads the wretch's acknowledgment that he was fully within the possession of the homicidal impulse.

Herman W. Mudgett, alias H. H. Holmes, was born at Gilmanton, N. H., May 16, 1860. His parents, who were

perfectly normal people, are still living. He married in his native State, when only about eighteen years of age, Clara A. Lovering, whom he soon deserted. In 1878, his first wife being still alive, he married Myrta Z. Belknap, under the name of Harry Howard Holmes, and in 1894 married Miss Yoke. He was educated for a physician at Ann Arbor, Mich., after he was married.

Holmes began his confession by solemnly asserting that he would write the full and exact truth, holding back nothing; after which he proceeded to compliment the detectives who had unearthed the bodies of some of his victims, and fastened upon him the awful crime of murder. He proceeded to state that at the time of his arrest in 1894 he was a normal man, at least to all appearances, though he believed that he had, long before, given himself up to the devil. From the time his imprisonment began, he claimed that he had physically degenerated, and had come to resemble those pictures of the evil one portrayed by the medieval artists of the church.

He stated that he first committed murder in 1886, his victim being Dr. Robert Leacock, of New Baltimore, Mich., a friend and former schoolmate. Knowing that there was a large insurance on his life, he enticed him to Chicago, and took his life by administering a large dose of laudanum. He took the body with him to various places around Grand Rapids, Mich., before he was able to dispose of it with safety, after which he collected the insurance money. He claims that he was greatly troubled with remorse for this first murder. "Later," he wrote, "like the man-eating tiger of the tropical jungle whose appetite for blood has once been aroused, I roamed about the world seeking whom I could destroy. Think of the awful list that follows! Twenty-seven lives, men and women, young girls and innocent children, blotted out by one monster's hand, and you, my reader of a tender and delicate nature, will do well to read no further, for I will in no way spare myself, and he who reads to the end, if he be charitable, will, in the words of the district attorney at my trial, when the evidence of all these many crimes had been collected and placed before him by his trusty assistants,

exclaim: 'God help such a man!' If uncharitable, or only just, will he not rather say: 'May he be utterly damned!' and that it is almost sufficient to cause one to doubt the wisdom of Providence that such a man should have so long been allowed to live?"

According to Holmes' story, his second victim was a Dr. Russell, a tenant of a building owned by him on Sixty-third street, Chicago, latterly known as "The Castle." He claimed that during a controversy over the payment of rent due from the doctor, he struck him with a heavy chair, killing him instantly. He sold the body to a medical college, and afterwards disposed of the remains of a number of his victims in the same manner, receiving from $25 to $45 each for them, thus meriting the title of "burker."

His next victim, a woman, died as a result of a criminal operation, there being two other parties cognizant of it. The victim, a Mrs. Julia L. Connor, had, Holmes stated, a little daughter named Pearl, whom he killed by poison, because he thought she was old enough to remember her mother's sickness and death, and perhaps make trouble by talking. The parties referred to, a man and a woman, Holmes stated to be as guilty as himself of this last murder.

He committed his fifth murder at West Morgantown, Va., the victim being a man named Rogers. Learning that he carried considerable money about his person, Holmes induced him to go on a fishing expedition with him, and killed him by a blow on the head with an oar. The body was found a month afterwards, but Holmes was not suspected until after his conviction in Philadelphia. Holmes claimed that he had a confederate in some of the murders he committed, but stated that the next crime of this awful character was actually committed by him. He had enticed a Southern speculator named Charles Cole to come to Chicago. While engaged with him in conversation at "The Castle," the confederate struck him a blow on the head with a piece of gas-pipe, which not only deprived him of life, but so badly shattered the skull as to render the body of little value for purposes of dissection.

A large number of his murders were committed in his

"Castle." This was a three-story and basement building which he erected at Sixty-third and Wallace streets, Chicago. On coming to Chicago in 1877 Holmes was employed in a drug store in that part of the city, and thus became familiar with the locality. He constructed the building not long before the opening of the World's Fair, and claimed that he proposed to rent apartments on the second floor to exposition visitors. As a matter of fact, it was a regular murder-den. It will seem almost incredible, but it is doubtless true, that the wretch's primary object in erecting this building was to provide a convenient place to gratify his inordinate lust and murder his victims. Holmes made the plans himself and superintended the construction, frequently changing the workmen so that no one knew of the various intricacies of its construction. It contained a perfect labyrinth of tortuous passages, a blind-room for storing stolen property, a number of secret and air-tight chambers, and a room of steel, thickly lined with cotton-batting and asbestos, to stifle the shrieks of victims. From the second floor a death-shaft was constructed to lower bodies into the cellar, from whence a hidden passage led to a sealed chamber. The cellar contained two large vaults of quicklime, and a hidden tank filled with a deadly oil. Then there was a first-class crematory for reducing bodies to ashes. The whole building was provided with electric devices by means of which he could be apprised of the approach of any one from any portion of the building. In devilish ingenuity, the "Holmes Castle" far surpassed the fictitious one described by Mrs. Radcliffe in the "Mysteries of Udolpho."

Holmes possessed a peculiar power of fascinating women. His manner was most courteous and polite, his voice sweet and well modulated, his eyes bright and penetrating, yet soft and insidious. This wonderful power he constantly exercised and numbered his victims by the score. He says in his confession that his seventh victim, a servant-girl, was murdered in the "Castle." An employé of his, named Pat Quinlan, was infatuated with the girl, and Holmes feared it would result in his leaving him. Before locking his victim in the close vault to die of slow suffocation, he forced her to write letters to

Quinlan and others, stating that she was going west, and would not return. After this followed three murders; that of a married woman, her unborn child and niece, the latter a young lady. The two women surprised him as he was preparing the body of his last victim for shipment. He succeeded in locking them in the vault, where he suffocated them, but not until, by promising them their lives on the condition of their leaving the city, he had induced them to write letters informing the married lady's husband that they had grown weary of him and were going away. The depravity of a wretch who could deliberately recount such baseness and cruelty, even granting that he exaggerated or lied in his story, can hardly be conceived.

Much has been written of the case of Miss Emmeline G. Cigrand, of Dwight, Ill., who disappeared most mysteriously while in the employ of Holmes as a stenographer. Holmes says that she became his mistress, and that he disposed of her because she was about to marry a young man whom she had known at Dwight. His first idea was to kill the prospective bridegroom—the day for the wedding had been set—and failing to accomplish his end, he determined to murder her instead. When she called to bid him good-bye, on the very day fixed for her marriage, he brutally locked her in his vault, so strongly suggestive of Bluebeard's closet, and left her to die a lingering death.

Holmes declared that his next victim was a beautiful young girl named Rosine Van Jassand, whom he induced to come to a fruit store that he seems to have established on Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, for the one purpose of entrapping innocent girls. He compelled her to live with him for some time, but, tiring of her, killed her with poison. He claimed to have buried her remains in the store basement. It is altogether likely that this story is no exaggeration, and that his victim was Edna Van Tassel, who was employed by Holmes and disappeared in 1893. It is probable that he killed her in the "Castle."

Soon after this murder he put an end to the life of his janitor, Robert Latimer. This man knew something of Holmes'

fraudulent schemes in the past, and undertook to extort "hush money" from him. He could not have made a greater mistake, and paid for it with his life, his body going to a medical college. The monster declared that he locked him in a secret room and left him to starve to death. Finally the poor wretch's pleadings became unbearable, and the "kind-hearted" Holmes killed him, in what manner, he did not say. In his confession Holmes numbered his victims, and the fourteenth was a Miss Anna Betts, whom he killed by substituting a poisonous drug in a prescription that was sent to his drug-store to be compounded. One cannot be expected to give a reason for everything, and the murderer dismissed this case with the assertion that he had expected to be called as a physician to attend her.

The wretch's account of the murder of an inventor named Warner has been doubted, and, for the credit of human nature, it is to be hoped that it was one of the inventive vagaries of his mind, and not a real occurrence. It will be briefly recounted because it shows the malignity of his heart and demonstrates that he was completely under the influence of the impulse to take human life. This man had a device for bending glass, and had constructed a furnace in the "Castle" for the purpose of demonstrating its practicability. It was so arranged that by a combination of steam and burning gas the temperature could be raised to a white heat in a minute or two. "It was into this kiln," wrote Holmes, "that I induced Warner to go with me, under pretense of making certain minute explanations of the process; and then stepping outside, as he believed, to get some tools, I closed the door and turned on both oil and steam to their full extent. In a short time not even the bones of my victim remained. The coat found outside the kiln was the one he took off before going therein." After the death of Mr. Warner the murderer drew a large sum of money from the Park National Bank of Chicago, which the dead man had on deposit. He did this by "raising" the amount of two small checks which Warner had given him.

Holmes claimed that, in 1891, he had become associated with

a young Englishman, whose name he did not give, who had committed, by his own admission, every crime save murder, and presumably that. This man induced a wealthy Wisconsin man, named Rogers, to come to Chicago and visit the "Castle," with a view to investing in some patents. The two secured him in the secret room and forced him to sign checks and drafts for $70,000. They did this by alternately starving and nauseating him with gas. They had no trouble in cashing the checks and drafts. Holmes did not propose to put the poor wretch to death, even suggesting that he be set at liberty. He did this to force his partner in crime to take the initiatory step, which he finally did, going to the extent of administering the chloroform that deprived him of life. Holmes sold his body for dissection. The wretch narrated another case of forming a partnership to murder. The victim was a wealthy woman, whose name he claimed to have forgotten, who became infatuated with a tenant of his. After a time, the tenant had trouble with his wife on her account, and came to Holmes for advice. He had struck the right man. The tenant lived with her for a time in the "Castle," after which they killed her with chloroform—Holmes' favorite instrument—and divided her property.

The murder of the Williams sisters was one of the worst of the fiend's many inhuman acts. He stated that it gave him a certain satisfaction to state that he had lied when he said that Minnie Williams had killed her sister in a fit of rage and he had sunk the body in Lake Michigan. Holmes said that he first met Minnie Williams in New York in 1888, and again, early in 1893, in Chicago. Upon the second introduction she did not remember having met him before. She entered his employ as a stenographer. His fascinating manner proved too much for her to resist, though she had previously led an entirely correct life. He induced her to give him $2,500 in money and transfer to him real estate in Fort Worth, Texas, worth $50,000. Afterwards he secured from her two checks aggregating $3,500. Learning that she had a sister, Nannie, in Texas, who had some property, he induced Minnie to send for her. Upon her arrival Holmes met her at the train and

took her to the "Castle," where he speedily forced her to make over all her property to him as the only means of saving her life, after which he suffocated her in his "vault of death." By means of intercepting letters and forging others, he succeeded in keeping Minnie in ignorance of the fact that her sister had left home. A fire in the "Castle" interfered with his plans for murdering Minnie. He took her to Momence, Ill., and poisoned her about eight miles east of that town, burying her body in the basement of a house. Holmes expressed contrition for the murder of these two girls, and also for the murder of the three Pitezel children. Before his execution he denied that he had himself killed the latter, and attempted to show that it had been done by confederates.

After killing a man, whose name Holmes said he could not recall—it must be remembered that the wretch carried on a wholesale business in murder—he went to Leadvile, Colo., and killed Baldwin Williams, a brother of the two murdered girls, securing the money due on a life-insurance policy in the favor of Minnie Williams, the beneficiary, whose assignment he had forged. This brought the murderer-author down to the Pitezel case. Of Pitezel he wrote:

"It will be understood that, from the first hour of our acquaintance, even before I knew he had a family who would later afford me additional victims for the gratification of my bloodthirstiness, I intended to kill him, and all my subsequent care of him and his, as well as my apparent trust in him by placing in his name large amounts of property, were steps taken to gain his confidence and that of his family, so that when the time was ripe they would the more readily fall into my hands. It seems almost incredible now, as I look back, that I could have expected to have experienced sufficient satisfaction in witnessing their deaths to repay me for even the physical exertion that I had put forth in their behalf during those seven long years, to say nothing of the amount of money I had expended for their welfare, over and above what I could have expected to receive from his comparatively small life insurance. Yet so it is and it furnishes a very striking illustration of the vagaries in which the human mind will, under

certain circumstances, indulge, in comparison with which the seeking of buried treasure at the rainbow's end, the delusions of the exponents of perpetual motion, or the dreams of the hashish fiend, are sanity itself."

Holmes admitted that he killed Benjamin F. Pitezel on September 2, 1894, as had been proved by the Commonwealth. Pitezel was much addicted to intemperance, and the murderer drove his victim to drink by writing him letters of a very discouraging character, which he made him believe came from his wife. On the fatal day he found Pitezel drunk, and proceeded to carry into execution his long cherished plan. The devil that reigned within this miserable wretch and drove him on to commit the most hideous crimes, never laughed more gleefully than on this occasion. Having tightly bound the legs and arms of his drunken victim, he saturated the body with benzine and ignited it with a match. Of this fearful act the arch-fiend wrote:

"So horrible was this torture that in writing of it I have been tempted to attribute his death to some more humane means—not with a wish to spare myself, but because I fear that it will not be believed that one could be so heartless and depraved—but such a course would be useless, for by exclusion, the authorities have determined for me that his death could only have occurred in this manner; no blows or bruises upon his body and no drug administered save chloroform, which was not placed in his stomach until at least thirty minutes after his death, and to now make a misstatement of the facts would only serve to draw out additional criticism from them. The least I can do is to spare my readers a recital of the victim's cries for mercy, his prayers, and finally, his plea for a more speedy termination of his sufferings, all of which upon me had no effect. Finally, when he was dead, I removed the straps and ropes that had bound him, and extinguished the flames, and a little later poured into his stomach one and one-half ounces of chloroform."

When the body of Pitezel was examined for identification, Holmes cut away with a knife such portions of his body as contained the marks that had been previously agreed upon. He

said that this was a source of intense gratification, and gave him an opportunity of pandering to his inordinate lust for blood.

He gave a long account of the murder of Howard Pitezel, which, however, threw little new light upon the matter, so thoroughly had it been worked out by Detective Geyer. He killed the boy by means of poison, after which he cut up the body and burned it in the large stove by the combined use of gas and corn-cobs. Of his motives for this act, he wrote:

"If I could now recall one circumstance, a dollar of money to be gained, a disagreeable act or word upon his part in justification of this horrid crime, it would be a satisfaction to me; but to think I committed this and other crimes for the pleasure of killing my fellow-beings, to hear their cries for mercy and pleas to be allowed even sufficient time to pray and prepare for death—all this is now too horrible for even me, hardened criminal that I am, to again live over without a shudder. Is it to be wondered at that since my arrest my days have been those of self-reproaching torture, and my nights of sleepless fear? Or that even before my death I have commenced to assume the form and features of the evil one himself?"

Holmes gave quite a detailed account of his travels with the two remaining children, whom he planned to kill in Detroit, and how he managed to keep them from meeting their mother, sister and baby brother, all of whom he designed to murder, and would have murdered, but for his opportune arrest in Boston. Having rented the house No. 16 St. Vincent street, Toronto, he took the two girls there late on the afternoon of October 25, 1894, and compelled them to get into a large trunk, through the top of which he had made a small opening. He then borrowed a spade, to arrange a place in the cellar, where his sister could store potatoes. Then he called on Mrs. Pitezel at her hotel, ate dinner at his own hotel, and returned and saw Mrs. Pitezel off on a train for Ogdensburg, N. Y. This necessary business dispatched, he returned and engaged in the pleasurable recreation of murdering the two children.

"Later than eight p. m.," he wrote, "I again returned to the house where the children were imprisoned, and ended

their lives by connecting the gas with the trunk. Then came the opening of the trunk, and the viewing of their little blackened and distorted faces, then the digging of the shallow graves in the basement of the house, the ruthless stripping off of their clothing, and the burial without a particle of covering save the cold earth, which I heaped upon them with fiendish delight. Consider what an awful act this was. These little innocent and helpless children, the oldest being only thirteen years of age, a puny and sickly child, who to look at one would believe much younger; consider that for eight years before their death I had been almost as much a father as though they had been my own children, thus giving them a right to look to me for care and protection, and in your righteous judgment let your bitterest curses fall upon me, but again I pray, upon me alone."

Herman Webster Mudgett, alias H. H. Holmes, was hanged in Moyamensing Prison, Philadelphia, on the morning of May 7, 1896. He spent his last day in writing letters to his friends and completing certain business with his lawyer. Some time before his execution he formally embraced the Roman Catholic religion, in which faith he died. He died as he lived, cool and impassive, seemingly as thoughtless of his own life as he had been of those of his many victims. There is much truth in the old aphorism: "The ruling passion is strong in death," and it exemplified itself in the ending of the multi-murderer. Next to the love of murdering, that of falsification was the passion that controlled him while living, and he died within a minute after calmly uttering a lie so monstrous that he must have known no human being would ever believe it.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have very few words to say. In fact, I would make no remarks at this time but for my feeling that in not speaking I would appear to acquiesce in my execution. I wish to say only that the extent of my wrongdoing in taking human life is the killing of two women—they having died by my hand as the result of criminal operations. I wish also to state here, so that there can be no chance of misunderstanding hereafter, that I am not guilty of taking

the lives of the Pitezel family, the three children or the father, Benjamin F. Pitezel, of whose death I was convicted, and for which I am to hang to-day. That is all I have to say.''

Measured by the established rules of criminology, the case of H. H. Holmes is a difficult one to analyze. His parents were perfectly normal and highly respected people, and the same is true of all the members of his immediate family. In youth he appears to have been of a most amiable disposition. His face was good, his eyes frank and honest, and possessed a habit of looking fairly into those of others. His manner was most engaging, and of a character to inspire confidence. Though sometimes in trouble, as a result of the numerous fraudulent schemes in which he engaged, no one seems to have imgained that he was anything worse than tricky and dishonest, until the awful disclosures that followed his arrest. His case cannot be assigned to the category of degenerates.

But if the theory of the homicidal impulse be accepted, there is nothing in the life of this monster that cannot be satisfactorily explained. The inherent disposition to take life was naturally strong in Holmes, and this, thanks to his almost total lack of conscience, coupled with his cupidity and lust, rapidly grew upon him until it became the controlling impulse of his life, and drove him on to the commission of the most revolting crimes. This is apparent from the monster's confession. That he lied in many particulars is doubtless true, but in explaining the motives that induced him to adopt his murderous course, he undoubtedly told the substantial truth. His nature had become so perverted that he derived positive pleasure in depriving his fellow-creatures of life, actually gloating over the sufferings of his victims.

This monster was once an innocent babe, an interesting child, an attractive youth, yet by giving way to this death-dealing impulse, he descended to depths of depravity where human comparisons fail and reference must be made to the devil himself, whom Holmes declared he had come to resemble in appearance, as well as disposition.

The moral of this man's infamous life and death is not hard to find: The love of self was the mainspring that con-

trolled all his actions. He fostered the lowest and most debased of human impulses, until he became utterly depraved, completely perverted. Had he yielded to better promptings, he might have lived a useful life and died an honorable death. No one who reads these pages should fail to profit by his terrible example.

CHAPTER XXIV

HAYWARD CASE

"May the curse of God fall on you and yours, and allow me, from the minute I drop from the scaffold, to haunt you day and night, until your death. Then I will welcome you on the brink of hell with a red-hot poker."

Uttered within three days of the time when he was to meet death at the hands of the hangman, and addressed to his brother, who had just finished saying, "God bless you, Harry; good-by, Harry," these awful words furnish sufficient data from which to form a correct judgment of the real character of the condemned murderer, Harry T. Hayward. The crime for which he suffered death was at once detestable and sensational, and will take its place among the remarkable murders of this generation. It was committed in the outskirts of the city of Minneapolis, Minn., on the night of Monday, December 3, 1894.

About eight o'clock in the evening of that day, as a young man named William U. Erhardt was returning from the city to his home, beyond the upper end of Lake Calhoun, he came upon the dead body of a woman lying by the roadside. It was a wild spot, where a road had been cut through a tamarack swamp. He hastened to give the alarm, and the body was removed to the county morgue. Before discovering the body the young man had seen a horse, attached to an empty buggy, dashing wildly along, and the death was supposed to have been the result of a runaway accident. The woman's nose had been badly crushed, and the skull fractured in two places. These facts seemed to confirm the theory, but a more minute examination disclosed a small hole back of the right ear, from which a bullet was extracted. At first it was believed to

be a case of suicide, but events soon came to light which placed it within the awful category of murder.

About nine o'clock that evening, a horse, which a liveryman named Henry Goosman had hired earlier in the evening to a stylish city dressmaker, named Catherine M. Ging, returned to its owner's barn, with an empty buggy. On the seat and also in the bottom of the vehicle quite a quantity of blood was discovered. This was promptly reported to the police, and led to the speedy identification of the body at the morgue as that of Miss Ging. The young woman, together with a niece named Louise Ireland, resided in the Ozark flats, a modern apartment building, owned by W. W. Hayward. The city was thrown into the wildest excitement, and reporters and police hurried to the home of the dead woman. While the place was still thronged, Harry T. Hayward, the youngest son of the owner, appeared upon the scene. He had a flat in the building, of which he had general charge, and had just returned from a theatre, where he had been accompanied by a young lady of his acquaintance.

The officers found nothing in Miss Ging's flat that threw any light upon the matter. Apprised of the occurrence, Hayward, accompanied by Emil Ferrant, went to the police headquarters. Up to the time of their arrival the idea that a crime had been committed was not entertained by any one, the bullet-hole not having been discovered at that time. Hayward at once announced that Miss Ging had been murdered, and that the crime had been committed for money. Later, when told of the discovery of the bullet, he exclaimed: "She's been murdered, and my $2,000 are gone!"

The statement made by Harry Hayward was correct; the young woman had indeed been murdered for money, and the crime had been committed at his instigation. The fact that Hayward knew a good deal of the habits and recent movements of the dead woman was speedily learned, and he was closely questioned, but no light was thrown upon the dark mystery. He stated that he had loaned her considerable money, and had taken some policies of insurance on her life, by way of security. He was unable to suggest who had prob-

ably committed the crime, and nothing further was learned that night.

The news of the mysterious murder created an intense excitement, and the mayor of the city, W. H. Eustis, took personal charge of the investigation. The day following the commission of the crime he caused Harry Hayward to be brought before him and the chief of police for examination. It was thought that he might give important information, though he does not appear to have fallen under suspicion. From ten o'clock in the morning until two o'clock the following morning, he was subjected to a fusillade of questions, all of which he answered promptly, and most of them satisfactorily. He maintained an air of perfect confidence and apparent innocence. Although his recitals aroused suspicions that he knew more than he was disposed to tell, there was no evidence to warrant his arrest, and, after spending the remainder of the night in the office of the chief of police, he was discharged the following morning, though kept under police surveillance. From this point facts accumulated in a manner that would have done credit to the imagination of the most sensational novelist, while they were themselves of a most remarkable, almost improbable, character.

On December 5th, two days after the murder, Albert H. Hall, assistant county attorney, received a long letter from a former associate of his, an old lawyer and real estate man, named Levi M. Stewart, familiarly known as "Elder Stewart." The elder stated that, three days before the murder, Adry Hayward, a brother of Harry, whom he had known intimately for many years, having been the lawyer and friend of the Hayward family, had called upon him and told a most remarkable and shocking tale, which the writer had regarded as pure nonsense, until later events had given it a terrible significance. In brief, it was to the effect that his brother, Harry, had attempted to secure his aid in murdering a woman—a dressmaker—for the purpose of making money, as Harry held insurance policies upon her life for quite a large sum. Adry stated that he had positively refused to have anything to do with the dark scheme, and had tried to dissuade his brother

from carrying it into effect. He was certain, however, that his protests would prove unavailing, since Harry had a confederate, and believed that he still designed to accomplish the woman's murder.

The good elder, who knew Harry Hayward to be a most remarkable liar, thought that he had simply been trying to frighten Adry, and told the latter so. But for Harry's reputation as a liar, the awful crime might have been prevented.

This communication raised a suspicion, amounting almost to a conviction, that Harry Hayward had had some connection with the murder, and the mayor, who had been apprised of its contents by Mr. Hall, hastened to send for the young man. In the meantime, he had been adding to the existing circumstances against him by making inquiries as to the steps to be taken for the prompt collection of the $10,000 insurance he held upon the life of the murdered girl. He was taken to the West Hotel, where he was interrogated at great length. As a part of his examination, he was taken to the morgue, and there suddenly and unexpectedly confronted with the remains of the dressmaker. If this was expected to break him down it was a dismal failure; he did not even flinch.

"Poor girl—poor dead girl," he said, with every indication of genuine emotion, "if you could only speak now you could tell who it was."

At 5:30 that afternoon a warrant was formally read to Hayward, and he was under arrest on the awful charge of murdering Catherine Ging. Shortly before midnight, that same day, Adry Hayward was taken into custody, charged with having fired the fatal shot. There was no particular evidence against Adry, but the police thought that he might have become an actor in the programme he had outlined to Elder Stewart. The two brothers were locked up in the county jail, where Adry refused to answer questions put to him by the police. At last, on Friday, he was confronted with Mr. Stewart. The latter strongly advised Adry to make a clean breast of the matter. The conference ended in his repeating to the police the same story he had told Elder Stewart; then so ridiculous, now so weighty and so fearfully incriminating

his own brother. In addition to the original tale, he disclosed the name of Harry's confederate, Claus. A. Blixt, the engineer of the Ozark flats. Blixt was arrested that day, together with a man named Ole Erickson, who had been much with him just before the murder. The engineer's wife was also taken into custody. They were not consigned to the jail, but placed in a lock-up a mile distant. A little later the public excitement became so great that the two brothers were removed to St. Paul, ten miles away, and confined in the Ramsey county jail.

Mrs. Blixt, who was entirely innocent, hastened to tell all she knew that could have a bearing on the crime, which was that, for some time before the murder, Harry Hayward had been much with her husband in the engine-room of the building. She was released from confinement, but was shadowed for some time.

Left to his own reflections, and free from the seemingly overpowering influence that Harry Hayward had exerted over him, Blixt was seized with an agony of dread, which increased as the hours passed. At length, on Sunday, December 9th, he broke down completely, and said that he desired to make a full confession of his part in the tragedy. A stenographer was sent for, and the statement of the engineer taken down in full.

He said that for months Harry Hayward had been trying to induce him to murder Miss Ging. To prepare him for the deed, Harry had told him of many murders that he had committed. Finally he induced the engineer to burn a barn, simply to tighten his hold upon his tool. Many schemes for murdering the dressmaker were discussed. The means employed by the murderous wretch will be better understood from his confession, a portion of which will be found towards the end of the present account. At length, Blixt said, December 3, 1894, was settled upon as the time. Harry was to drive her out to Lake Calhoun, and kill her, after which Blixt was to join him and dispose of the remains. He said that the programmme was carried out. He was on the ground in advance of the couple's coming. He heard a shot fired, and a moment later Harry drove up, supporting the body of the murdered woman. "Be sure she's dead," he cried, as he jumped out of

the buggy, "before you leave her." Blixt concluded with an account of how he threw the body out of the vehicle, turned the horse loose, and made his way back to his home in the flats.

This statement removed all doubts from the minds of the police, and they regarded the evidence as complete. But they soon realized that Harry Hayward was not the only liar in Minneapolis, since he was undoubtedly at the Grand Opera House at the time the murder was committed and could prove a complete alibi. Blixt was at once subjected to a rigid cross-examination, under which he broke down and admitted that he had shot the girl himself, though maintaining that, in other respects, his first confession was correct. In his first story he had followed one of the many plans suggested by Harry.

Seldom in this country has judicial action more swiftly followed the commission of a great crime. On Monday, December 10th, the grand jury began an investigation of the case, Adry Hayward being used as a witness. The following day two indictments were found against Harry T. Hayward and Claus. A. Blixt, charging them with the murder of Catherine Ging. On December 17th, Blixt was arraigned and entered a plea of guilty. The court appointed two attorneys to represent him, but his family secured the services of R. R. Odell to defend him. Under the advice of his attorney, who assured him that he would escape the gallows, Blixt appeared in court and altered his plea to not guilty. Sheriff Ege brought Hayward from St. Paul in an interurban car. He was not ironed, and his identity not discovered. December 22d he entered a plea of not guilty, and the trial was set for January 21, 1895. Hayward's father had secured for him very able counsel: W. W. Erwin, of St. Paul, and John Day Smith, of Minneapolis.

The famous trial began at the appointed time, and attracted wide attention. The position of Adry Hayward was somewhat equivocal, and many believed that he had a guilty connection with the crime; indeed, Harry attempted to throw the whole responsibility upon him. Ten days were consumed in securing a jury, a special venire of two hundred being exhausted before twelve men, acceptable to both sides, were

found. One of these was subsequently discharged, it being ascertained that he had expressed himself as opposed to capital punishment. The trial was before Judge Smith.

Over one hundred witnesses were examined, the most important of them being Blixt, the actual murderer. He told substantially the same story as in his second confession, and made a decided impression upon the jury. Adry Hayward was also an important and sensational witness. He said that during the past summer Harry had told him that he was making certain investments for a dressmaker. In September he asked Adry if he wanted to make $2,000 by killing a woman, but Adry declined to have anything to do with it, and tried to dissuade his brother from the awful deed. On Thanksgiving day, he again tried to induce him to give it up. He said that Harry had told him that Blixt would do the deed. On December 3d he told Adry that he had better go to the theatre that night, as something was going to happen. After their arrest, while in jail together, Harry said to him: "Oh, well, Blixt will stick out; I am more afraid of what you might say than anybody else." There was a mass of other testimony of a decidedly convincing character. One witness swore that he saw Harry Hayward in a buggy with Miss Ging about half-past seven o'clock on the evening of the murder, while another had seen him, a little later, running away from the neighborhood of the place where he was said to have turned the buggy over to Blixt.

Harry's father and mother both testified in his behalf, though their statements were of little importance. One of the most sensational features of the long trial was the appearance of the prisoner in the witness chair. For two days he was questioned and cross-questioned, without disconcerting him to the smallest extent; indeed, the *sang-froid* he preserved was something remarkable and called out expressions of general wonderment. He entered most emphatic denials to the statements of Blixt and his brother Adry.

The case was given to the jury on the morning of Friday, March 8th, having consumed nearly seven weeks. After four hours' deliberation a verdict of guilty was returned. On March

11th, Harry T. Hayward was formally sentenced to be hung, on a day to be appointed by the governor of the State, not less than three months from that day. He received the death sentence with a sneer; indeed, he appears to have been quite confident that he would escape the gallows. For years the condemned man had been a gambler—indeed, according to his own confession, it was this vice that had led him to commit murder. As a gambler he was much given to the calculation of chances and entertained a high opinion of his ultimate good luck. The execution of the sentence was deferred to permit the hearing of an appeal to the Supreme Court of the State. This, however, availed the condemned man nothing, the court below being sustained on all the material points.

Harry Hayward's father was quite a wealthy man, and the young man was well supplied with money while in jail. Thanks to this, he appears to have been quite confident of effecting an escape. He expected to gain his freedom on October 9th, through the aid of associates. He gave Michael Kierce, the court-house jailer, halves of eleven bank-notes of one hundred dollars each. The other portions of them were to be given to him when Hayward secured his liberty. Kierce carried these half-notes to the sheriff and explained the whole matter. The prisoner was searched, and quite a large sum of money, halves of the eleven notes, keys, etc., were found concealed upon his person. The supreme disgust of the murderer to so narrowly miss escaping can be better imagined than described. He was removed to another cell, where he spent the remainder of his life in solitary confinement.

Blixt appears to have fully realized the enormity of his crime, and to have most bitterly repented it. While in jail he devoted much of his time to reading the Bible, and gave many evidences of contrition. He was sentenced to imprisonment for life, and seemed resigned to his fate.

On December 8, 1895, three days before the time fixed by the governor for his execution, Harry Hayward wrote a note to his brother Adry, towards whom he had manifested the most intense hatred since the time of his arrest, asking him to call and see him at the jail, as he wished to beg his forgive-

ness. The terrible words quoted at the beginning of this narrative concluded the interview that ensued. The meeting of the two brothers was without witnesses, the guards having withdrawn some distance from the cell door at the request of the prisoner. Their meeting was friendly, and they conversed for some time in low tones. At length the voices of both were raised. Harry had made some demand upon his brother, to which the latter replied in appealing tones: "But, Harry, how can I?"

This answer aroused all the venom in the wicked heart of the depraved murderer. Springing to the iron grating that separated him from his brother, his rather handsome face alternately ashen and livid from the intense hatred that controlled him, he poured forth this bitter, almost demoniacal, tirade:

"You low-down, mean, contemptible, miserable, damnable wretch. You refuse to do that after what I have done for you. You God-forsaken tool. You have played a good part, but now I can tell you what I think of you. My letter to you was after all only a decoy for that purpose. You d—d villain. If I could only get at you, I would dig out your brains with a knife. I would tear out your heart with my hands. I would crush the two together, cut them into pieces, squeeze out the juice, make it into a pie, and thrust it down your throat!"

Before Harry's execution the two met again, and the murderer begged his brother's forgiveness, his intense hatred seeming to have passed away. Harry T. Hayward met his death about two o'clock on the morning of December 11, 1895. His marvelous nerve did not desert him in his last dreadful extremity. He made a long, rambling speech, in which he said good-bye to many of his friends, addressing them by name. He indulged in many ghastly pleasantries, and was, beyond all comparison, the best-collected man present. Near the end he repeated a brief prayer, asking God to pardon his sins. He explained that he did this at the request of John Day Smith, one of his counsel. To apologize for asking the forgiveness of the Maker one is about to meet is a performance almost without parallel. His last words—"I stand pat"—

indicate his stoical character, and the frame of mind in which he left the world, where he had cut such an unworthy figure.

The night before his execution Hayward made a long and detailed confession of his many crimes. In part this consisted of his own voluntary statements, and in part of answers to numerous questions. This was made to his cousin, Edward H. Goodsell, and J. T. Mannix, of the Minneapolis *Times*. It was taken down verbatim by Richard A. Mabey, a local stenographer. Love of money was the ruling passion of Harry Hayward's heart, and it maintained its supremacy to the end. He seems to have had some affection for his father —though he admitted that at one time he had meditated his murder. Mr. Hayward had spent a large sum of money in his son's defense, and the latter suggested that his confession, made immediately before his death, would bring quite a sum to apply on the debt he felt he owed his parent. This appears to have been the prime motive for making his dying statement.

Lack of space prevents more than a general notice of this remarkable document, but enough will be presented to show his motives for taking the life of Catherine Ging, the methods he employed to cause another to do the dark deed, and to clearly demonstrate that Harry T. Hayward was possessed of the homicidal impulse, and that in a most pronounced and indisputable form.

Harry T. Hayward was born in McCoupin county, Illinois, and was thirty-one years old at the time of his death. When he was a year old his parents removed to Minneapolis, where he was raised and educated, and where he spent the greater portion of his life. He was acquisitive from his childhood. "Money," he declared, by way of introduction to his last statement, "has always been my god."

Gambling was the special sin that sent Harry Hayward to the scaffold. He says that in his youth he was never addicted to stealing, but began gambling when about twenty years of age, frequenting public gaming houses for that purpose. At first he went only at long intervals, and never played to win over two dollars. The habit soon became fixed upon him, however, and drove him into evil courses which led him to

commit murder. While still young, he became a good deal of a rover, visiting various sections of the country, particularly the South and West.

His first serious crime was committed near San Antonio, Texas, in December, 1884. There he had a liaison with a Spanish girl, and, being assaulted by her brother, shot and seriously wounded him. The girl had money which he determined to possess, but he was obliged to leave without securing it, on account of the affray.

Probably the first murder of Hayward was committed at Pasadena, Cal. His first victim, like his last, was a woman, a friendless girl about twenty years of age, whom he had known but a few days, having met her at a public dance. This girl, whose name the murderer did not give, had some seven hundred dollars that she had inherited from her father. Hayward learned that she had this money in the bank, and induced her to draw it out and give it to him, for investment, the arrangement being that he was to marry her. When he decided to kill her, he already had the money in his possession, but as she knew his real name and residence, he was fearful that she might make him trouble. His plan formed, he secured a conveyance and drove out with the girl to the Sierra Madre Valley, some six miles from Pasadena. He murdered her there by shooting her in the back of the head, so that he might not see her face after she was dead. He said that his theory had always been that murderers were often haunted by visions of the distorted faces of their victims, and so driven to confession.

The deed done, he dug a shallow grave with a piece of board, and hid her body from his sight. She seems to have haunted, or at least troubled him, however, for, a few days later, according to his solemn confession, he hired a man in Los Angeles to go out with him, disinter the remains, and put them in a box, which he took along for that purpose. This box was to be brought back to Los Angeles, weighted and sunk in the bay. Whether this was actually done he was not certain, though he paid the man one hundred dollars for the service.

Upon his return home from California he became an incendiary, firing several buildings, among others a house that stood upon the ground where the Ozark flats were afterward built. He did this because he wanted his father to put up a fine new building, and knew that the removal of the old one, which was fully insured, would facilitate matters.

He admitted that he had planned murders that he never carried into execution; among them that of a young lady in Minneapolis, who was possessed of two thousand dollars, and his cousin, Edward H. Goodsell, who had a like amount. He spoke of these matters as if they were ordinary business transactions. He had attempted to get his father to make a will largely in his favor, his intention being to murder him. On this point he said, repeating what he had recently told his father: "I had kind of sized things up in my mind, and had figured on you like that." And he added: "But I told him no, I wouldn't do it, on account of liking to see him around, you know; and I wanted him around, and my mother the same way."

In the course of his statement he described a bull-fight, as he had seen it in Havana. The recollection of the horrid scene, where bulls and horses were killed and several men badly injured, seemed to give him intense satisfaction. This, in the author's opinion, is a modification of the genuine homicidal impulse. Harry Hayward undoubtedly delighted in suffering and murder.

By 1892 gambling had become the ruling passion of his life, and it was this, coupled no doubt with an inherent desire to kill, that made him a murderer. At times he needed money to make good the losses he had sustained, and also that he might indulge in his favorite pastime. In the fall of that year he was in New York, gambling. He won some money and decided to go to Monte Carlo, but finally gave it up. At this time he committed another murder. This was at Long Branch, his victim being a man in poor health, who talked a good deal of committing suicide. As he was possessed of some two thousand dollars, Harry decided to become philanthropic and save him the trouble of taking his own life. He

shot this man in the woods near Long Branch, and disposed of his body so that the tide would carry it out to sea. He meditated killing two others at this time, but did not carry his plans into execution.

In 1893 he was again in New York, at which time he murdered a Chinaman in a most brutal manner. He entered a gambling-house, in the Chinese section of the city, and began to play. Finally, he quarreled with one of the Chinamen and knocked him down. His own description of this affair clearly shows the satisfaction he felt in recalling it. "I knocked him down with my fist or hand," he said. "I kicked him in the belly, and I took the round of a chair—it wasn't as large as that one there, it was a small round; it was a little smaller than this—I mean the leg of this chair. And he was down and he was howling, and I took it in my hand and jabbed the corner in his eye, and his skull was kind of thin and I kind of sided it up to the top of his head and smashed it down in there, and I got on the chair and sat on it, and you know it went through, went down into him."

When it is understood that he interrupted himself with laughing, during this and other horrid recitals, there can remain no doubt but what he really delighted in taking human life. The death of the Chinaman caused a regular stampede on the part of the inmates of the den, during which he made his escape. Harry Hayward was a great liar, and it is possible that some of his statements, though made almost at the foot of the scaffold, were either false or at least exaggerated. But, whether true or false, they seem to clearly establish the fact that he was a victim of the homicidal impulse.

But it was that portion of his statement concerning the Ging murder that excited the greatest interest, and it is this that most clearly shows the real character of the despicable wretch, whose god was money, and who placed a most trifling value upon human life. Hayward appears to have had a decided penchant for robbing and murdering young women. He said that his plan for winning their confidence was to treat them with great respect, making no attempt at undue familiarity. He declared, and probably told the truth, that he

never sustained any relations, other than those of a strictly business character, with Catherine Ging.

According to his story, he formed the acquaintance of the dressmaker, who occupied apartments in his father's building, and who was possessed of considerable means, in January, 1894. Like many other women, Miss Ging was strongly inclined to speculation, and young Hayward was just the man to make investments for her. In this manner he secured from her several thousand dollars, which he spent in carousing and gambling. He seems to have acquired a decided control over her from the first, else she would not have been satisfied with the explanations he offered as to the failure of his schemes and the loss of her money. By August, 1894, he had secured all her ready money, and, being in pressing need of funds, burned a mill a little distance from the city, upon which she held a mortgage for twelve hundred dollars. This was secured by an insurance policy. He tried to induce his brother Adry to join him in this criminal enterprise, but failed to do so. The policy was paid, and Harry secured the major portion of the money, though he denounced her bitterly in his confession for not giving him all of it. When asked how he managed to secure all this money, he made the following reply:

"Now, here is where you have got to believe in hypnotism a little bit. I would explain to her that I had stuff out in New York, some diamonds; and I would explain that in such a complicated way that I couldn't understand it myself. You think of a thing that is so simple and you can see through it, but you take a complicated thing, and it captivates people more, they think there must be something to it. Well, I explained it around a little, and she is one of this kind to say, yes, she understood it; at the same time I couldn't understand it myself."

It was at this time that he formulated a scheme for murdering her. He used these mysterious diamonds as a means of entrapping her into taking out life insurance policies in his favor for ten thousand dollars. Hayward was to beat the owner out of the gems, and he and Miss Ging were to be

partners in the enterprise. He was to secure the diamonds and sell them to her for seven thousand dollars. The whole transaction was a scheme to prevent the real owner from recovering them from Hayward. No money was to be paid, but it was to be given out that Hayward had loaned her the money to make the purchase. To make everything look regular on its face, she was to assign the policies on her life to him as security for the imaginary loan. It seems almost incredible that a shrewd woman could have been so easily deceived, unless we adopt the murderer's theory and admit that he hypnotized her. Perhaps her eyes were dazzled by the expectation of possessing diamonds worth a large sum of money. The insurance policies secured, nothing remained to be done but the—to him—trifling matter of murdering the dressmaker.

Hayward declared that Miss Ging was at times very suspicious, and acted in a most unreasonable manner. She refused to sign the notes for the imaginary loan, without some consideration being shown, and he finally gave her seven thousand dollars to count, five thousand of which was counterfeit. The counting completed, he pretended to seal the money up in envelopes for her, adroitly substituting pieces of paper.

Hayward admitted that he had had some talk with his brother Adry about the murder, but declared that the latter was entirely innocent of any complicity in the commission of the crime. Having decided to use Blixt as his tool, he set about gaining control over him. His account of the process he employed cannot but prove interesting. To the average mind it appears a little unreasonable, but not more so than any other theory that has been advanced to account for the strange relations between the two men.

"This is what will make the strange part of the book," said Harry, when asked about Blixt. "Is there such a thing as hypnotism? I have hypnotized Blixt and also Kate Ging. I started with Blixt by taking a pile of money out of my pocket. I didn't mean to get him into an epileptic state, but talked money, and drew his attention, and when you can branch him from one thing to another, from a newspaper to a

hammer, for instance, move him every time, you have got him, and you can go on and talk later on about killing people. Say, 'Why, it is nothing; just like killing mice.' Well, it makes an impression on him, and he believes it, and I labored systematically with Blixt in that way, with money, dwelling upon the importance of having the stuff and getting it easy. I would say: 'Well, there was nothing in killing people; kill a rat just as well. What is the difference—they are dead?' and Blixt would say, 'Certainly, it don't make any difference.' I was trying Blixt. I was trying to haunt him. I said, 'Supposing she comes back dead and gets in the elevator and shook her hand?' Blixt says, 'I will ride over fifty of them—an elevator full of them.' He felt that way, too, at the time being. Most of this talk was in the basement. I didn't pay any attention to him until a month before in this line. I saw that he was a good subject, because you can help it along by flattery. He was very susceptible to flattery, and I knew that money would bring him. He seemed to like to talk on the subject, and was glad to have me come down to the basement."

Hayward claimed that he had the engineer so completely under his control that he would have killed any one he ordered him to. Not long before Hayward's execution, and after Blixt had been sent to the penitentiary at Stillwater, the latter made a statement to the effect that, on the night of the murder, Hayward gave him whisky which contained nitroglycerine, and that the effect of this poison deprived him of all free-will, and compelled him to do the bidding of Hayward. Quite an elaborate theory was constructed on this statement. The dose administered was sufficient to compel him to obey instructions for an hour or so, and then deprive him of life. Blixt claimed that Hayward had told him to bring away the woman's sealskin sacque and be careful not to lose his revolver. According to these rather sensational theorists, Blixt was to commit the crime and then die suddenly, with the revolver and sacque as his mute but unanswerable accusers. Harry laughed when questioned about this, and declared that there was nothing in it, that he gave the engineer whisky, but that it contained no nitroglycerine, or other drug.

He talked the matter over many times with Blixt, proposing various plots. He said he did this because two heads were better than one and he wanted to get suggestions from his accomplice as to the practicability of the different plans. For the same reason he talked about the matter with his brother Adry. He declared that on the night of Saturday, December 1, 1894, two days before the murder, he had driven out with Miss Ging, his intention being to kill her himself. He took with him a piece of T-rail that had been bought for use in the furnace of the Ozark flats, with which to do the deed. His heart did not fail him—he was anxious to kill her—but no favorable opportunity presented itself. When asked whether he really felt an impulse to murder that night, he replied:

"Oh, yes. There is where I tell you I can understand about the San Francisco murderer, Durant. I could have taken her by the throat, you know, and choked her, with some sort of satisfaction in it many a time and just laugh at it."

Hayward had told Miss Ging that more than half the money in circulation was counterfeit, and that even the banks couldn't tell the difference. The ride on the Saturday night and the one on Monday evening following were taken under the pretext that they could secure a large quantity of "green goods" from a band of counterfeiters, who were domiciled near Lake Calhoun. The whole thing was a mystery to the young woman, and Hayward claimed that his success was due to this very circumstance. On the fatal night, when he left the buggy and turned her over to the care of the actual murderer, he whispered to her that they would surely make the stake—meaning that they would secure the counterfeit money. Just before Blixt came up he said to her:

"I have never told you, but here is Blixt, the engineer. We have to keep him in disguise, but the man is rich. Blixt is rich, and is just working there for a disguise. Anything he says is all right, but I can't stop long to ask any question. He will take you out, and I will meet you out there."

In answer to questions as to his motives in taking the girl's life he declared that it was the desire to secure the insurance

money, coupled with hatred. He said that he often felt impelled to choke her. When it is remembered that he had secured all the money that she possessed, and that she was completely under his control, the nature of the hatred he felt for her is somewhat difficult to understand. It seems highly probable that his hatred was more imaginary than real; a justification to himself of the crime he was about to commit in obedience to the controlling motives of cupidity and the desire to kill.

After Hayward's execution a mole was found under his left ear, in popular superstition an indication that he was to be hanged. In this connection, a remark made by him towards the close of his confession becomes decidedly interesting: "Well, this murder was on my mind, sitting by the side of her, perhaps holding her hands; not much spooning, because I didn't have much heart for that, you know; as little as could be. When she sat down with me, time and again, four or five different times, somebody had told her something, and she would put her finger on me this way—it comes back to me now—and say, 'Harry, here is where the hangman's knot goes,' putting her finger under the left ear. Thinks I, if she only knew what was in my mind, it would be more real."

In answer to a question as to whether he had not become a murderer by reason of his passion for money and gambling, he replied, concluding his long and remarkable confession, as follows:

"Well, I suppose that is it, but don't put me on record as sorry. The idea is I have made my bed, and I am willing to lie in it without a kick, and to quote these lines, which have been of much satisfaction to me, from Dryden:

> " 'Happy the man, and happy he alone,
> He who can call to-day his own;
> He who sincere within can say,
> To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.'

You see that fits the scaffold here.

> " 'Come fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
> The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine,
> Not heaven itself over the past hath power,
> But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.' "

A post-mortem examination of the brain of Harry T. Hayward is said to have clearly shown that he was a degenerate with born predilections to crime. That he was insane in the ordinary acceptation of the term seems altogether out of the question, though it is equally clear that he had completely resigned himself to his evil passions and the impulse to take human life.

CHAPTER XXV

THEODORE DURANT, THE SAN FRANCISCO MONSTER

Fact is often stronger than fiction; beyond that, it is frequently more brutal. The horrors of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "Oliver Twist," "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," even, find their counterpart, are surpassed really, by those of the Durant murders, perpetrated in San Francisco early in 1895. The wildest invention of a Stephenson, a Dickens or a Poe, never developed the awful climaxes of this Tragedy in Real Life. The nearest resemblance is found in the "Hunchback of Notre Dame," who leaped nimbly among the huge rafters of the old cathedral and fiercely clanged the bells; for Durant committed his murders within the sacred precincts of a house dedicated to the worship of God. Ugly and deformed, Quasamoda possessed a kindly heart, while Theodore Durant—tall, handsome, athletic—was a devil incarnate, as much under the control of the foul fiend as was the hunchback's master and benefactor, the abbé, when he gave over the beautiful young gypsy to be hanged as a sorceress.

The case of Durant is, in some respects, unique in the history of crime. The awful character of the deeds, the motives that led to them, the place where they were committed, the disposition of the remains, the remarkable methods adopted in secreting the clothing of one of the victims, the youth and beauty of the murdered girls, the wonderful self-possession of the brutal murderer, his previous good character and religious professions, his remarkable perversion, the circumstantial evidence that fastened the crimes upon him, the fury of the populace—all these, and other matters, characterized this case as one of the most peculiar of all that have ever occurred in America.

Theodore Durant was a native of California, having been born in San Francisco, near the scenes of his crimes, in 1871. Although a most depraved wretch, he came from excellent people, his family having long been a very respectable one. He was not married, but lived with his parents. In appearance, Theodore was tall and well developed, though of a somewhat slender build. He was quite generally accounted handsome, but his face was almost unnaturally pale, and his cheek-bones high and prominent. His eyes were his worst feature; they were light blue, and possessed a certain fish-like glassiness. Durant was much stronger than his appearance indicated, being decidedly athletic. He was a member of the Second Brigade Signal Corps, and at the time the crimes were committed was a student of the Cooper Medical College, in San Francisco, where he had been about a year. Durant was quite a society man, mingling with a good class, most of them being church-people. He was a member of Emanuel Baptist Church, on Bartlett street. He took a very active part in church matters, being a good deal about the church. He was assistant superintendent of the Sunday-school, church librarian, and secretary of the Young People's Society. He was foremost in church sociables and other entertainments. Taken altogether, Theodore was a popular young man, his life had always been regular, so far as known, he was well regarded by the church-people, and was fairly bright and active in his professional studies.

The victims of Durant's lust and homicidal impulse were two young and beautiful girls, Blanche Lamont, and Minnie Williams. The former was a striking brunette, while the latter was a very attractive blonde. Both girls were large and well developed for their years. They were devoted friends, and, being much together, each shone by contrast with the other. They both attended the Emanuel Baptist Church, mingled in the young society of the congregation, and were well acquainted with Durant.

Blanche Lamont was about eighteen years of age. She was born at Rockford, Ill., being the daughter of David Lamont. While yet a young girl she removed to Dillon,

Mont., with her father, where the latter died in 1891. Early in 1894, being in delicate health, she went to San Francisco to an aunt named Mrs. Charles Noble, with whom she was living at the time of her death. She was a student of a city normal school. Minnie Williams was only about seventeen years old. She had formerly lived in the neighborhood of the Emanuel Baptist Church. Upon the separation of her parents, not long before the tragedy, she went across the bay and made her home with friends named Morgan, in Alameda, her idea being to find employment. The Morgan family were preparing to leave for Tacoma, and on April 12, 1895, Minnie removed her belongings to the house of a Mrs. Voy, near the church. Blanche Lamont was a decidedly handsome girl, and attracted attention wherever she appeared. These beautiful and intelligent girls, universally respected and beloved, just entering upon the full bloom of womanhood, with bright and happy prospects, were destined to die at the hands of a cruel, perverted wretch.

The third leading factor in the awful tragedies was the Baptist Emanuel Church. It was a large, red, wooden structure, and was widely known to San Francisco people. Churches stand for morality and salvation, their taper spires pointing silently, but most eloquently, the way to heaven. None of us are pleased with the sight of a signboard that indicates a path we are most loath to follow. Millions in this country entertain no kindly feelings towards churches for much the same reasons. Hence it is that the wrong-doings of church people are much more talked about, and that with greater relish, than their noble acts of charity, self-sacrifice, and genuine piety. The sacred edifice in question was popularly known to those who tabooed all forms of worship, as the "Hoodoo Church." This appellation was not altogether unmerited. It had been struck by lightning, its trustees had once defaulted, and one of its former pastors had committed suicide, after killing the proprietor of a newspaper. The phrase, "Burn it down," had been uttered by thousands of people, so much was it disliked. The section of the city where it stands was originally in the Mission Dolores, founded by friars a full hundred years ago,

and is yet spoken of as "The Mission." A still darker notoriety awaited the old wooden structure, destined to practically destroy its usefulness.

April 3, 1895, Blanche Lamont disappeared from view. Her aunt at once reported the matter to the police, and diligent search was made for her, without the slightest results being obtained. Mrs. Noble was unable to throw any light upon the matter; so far as she knew, Blanche had no lover, and she was positive that the girl had not eloped. The inquiry led to some revelations that afterward proved of decided value. It was learned that the missing girl had been quite intimately acquainted with Theodore Durant, also that she was a devoted and inseparable friend of Minnie Williams, who, however, was, or professed to be, altogether in the dark as to her friend's whereabouts. Whether she suspected the young medical student of knowing anything about the matter is uncertain, though many believe that she had serious suspicions, and that they led to her own death. For a few days the newspapers contained items about the matter, but these decreased in size, and soon ceased altogether. In the meantime, Durant not only denied all knowledge of the whereabouts of the missing girl, but was constantly making suggestions, always claiming that she would soon turn up. To some he hinted that Blanche had gone astray, and would appear in some disreputable connection.

But an awful revelation was at hand. On Saturday, April 13th, the day before Easter Sunday, some ladies repaired to the Emanuel Baptist Church to decorate it for the great Christian festival. After a time they passed from the auditorium into the library, where they sat down. Opening out of it was a small room, little more than a closet, where some books were kept, and which the pastor sometimes used as a study. One of the ladies opened the door of this miniature apartment, only to stagger back with horror and affright depicted upon her face. The force of the awful shock having somewhat abated, the terrified ladies approached and inspected the closet. Upon the floor, horribly mutilated and covered with blood, lay the body of a girl whom they at once recognized as Minnie Williams.

The police were promptly notified, and an immense throng soon congregated about the church. Evidences of a great struggle were apparent; the poor girl had not parted with life and honor without making an almost superhuman effort to retain them. Her clothing was torn and disheveled. She had been gagged, and that in a manner indicative of a fiend rather than a man. A portion of her underclothing had been thrust down her throat with a stick, her tongue being terribly lacerated by the operation. A cut across her wrist had severed both arteries and tendons. This wound had evidently been inflicted with a sharp instrument. She had been stabbed in each breast, and directly over her heart was a deep cut in which a portion of a broken knife remained. This was an ordinary silver table-knife, one of those used in the church at entertainments where refreshments were served. It was round at the end, and so dull that great force must have been used to inflict the fearful wounds; indeed, it appeared that the cold-blooded wretch had deliberately unfastened his victim's dress that the knife might penetrate her flesh. The little room was covered with blood, but not a stain was discovered in the library, showing that the knife had been wielded in the inner apartment. The theory is that the murderer succeeded in overpowering and choking the poor girl into insensibility in the auditorium of the church, after which he dragged her through the library and completed his work, which no power short of that derived from the devil himself, could have prompted him to do. In making his way from the auditorium to the library, he broke the lock of the door that connected the two apartments.

On the evening preceding the discovery of the remains there was a meeting of the Young People's Society at the residence of Dr. Vogel, not far from the church. Minnie Williams was expected to be there. Shortly after seven o'clock that evening she left Mrs. Voy's, remarking that she was going to the meeting, and taking a latch-key with her. At about the same hour Durant left his home, which was in the same vicinity, with the announced purpose of going to Dr. Vogel's. He was seen about eight o'clock by a young man

who, like himself, was a member of the signal corps, and some conversation ensued relative to a trip the corps was to make the next day. He did not present himself at Dr. Vogel's until nine-thirty o'clock. When he did it was noticed, and afterwards recalled, that his hair was disarranged, his face whiter even than usual, and covered with perspiration. Upon entering the house, which was thronged with company, the first thing he did was to beg permission to wash his hands. He was not long in recovering his composure, and during the remainder of the evening none laughed more merrily or entered more heartily into the sports and merriments than Theodore Durant. So perfect was his acting—if indeed he felt anything like remorse for the diabolical deed he had just committed—that not a suspicion was aroused; indeed, many of those present at first refused to believe in his guilt on the ground that a murderer, just from the disfigured remains of his victim, could not have conducted himself as Theodore Durant did that evening. On general principles the point was well taken; not one man in thousands, of his age and antecedents, could have acted the part he did. But Durant was that one man. His character was as double as that of Dr. Jekyl. His most intimate friends regarded him as a good-natured, amiable, interesting young man; and not one in all the city had the slightest conception of the diabolical disposition—worse than Anton Probst's, and fully equaling that of "Jack the Ripper"—which he masked behind his white and smiling face. After leaving the social gathering he was seen to enter the church. This was nothing unusual, since he carried a key to the edifice, and spent a good deal of his time upon the premises, where he was regarded in the light of a general utility man, making little repairs and being decidedly useful. Early the following morning, long before the murder was discovered, he started with his comrades of the signal corps for Mount Diablo, fifty miles away.

A number of circumstances pointed to the young student as the murderer. He was known to have been on very friendly terms with Miss Williams, and had been seen with her on the street-car the afternoon before the murder. On Friday after-

noon he was noticed at the dock where ferryboats from Alameda landed in the city. It is likely that he was there to meet Minnie Williams by appointment. It will be remembered that on that day she left the Morgans in Alameda, and removed her effects to the house of Mrs. Voy, near the church.

In consequence of all these pointers, none of which, it must be admitted, were very compromising, and the circumstance that not the slightest clue pointed to any other person, Theodore Durant fell under suspicion. Saturday night a newspaper reporter for the San Francisco *Chronicle* called at the Durant residence and interviewed Theodore's mother. She was horrified at the murder, of which she had heard nothing, and still more so at the bare suggestion that her son could have had anything to do with the awful crime. She stated that Theodore was out of the city, but consented to allow the reporter to examine the clothes he had worn the preceding evening. The newspaper man expected to find blood-stains, but in this he was disappointed. But his search was not without results; in one of the pockets of the suit he found a woman's pocketbook, which he carried away without opening it. At the *Chronicle* office it was examined and found to contain, besides a small amount of change and a few trinkets, some ferry-tickets good on boats running from Alameda to the city. Mr. Williams was sent for, and promptly and positively identified the pocketbook as one that had belonged to his daughter Minnie. Here was something tangible, decidedly incriminating, in fact. In telling the story in its issue of Sunday morning, the *Chronicle* boldly declared, not only that Durant was the murderer of Minnie Williams, but of Blanche Lamont as well, predicting that a thorough search of the "Hoodoo Church" would bring her remains to light.

Sunday morning officers entered the Emanuel Baptist Church and began searching for the remains of Blanche Lamont. It looked like a foolish quest; that the body of the girl, who had been missing for eleven days, was hidden about the premises, seemed almost absurd, yet the search went on. Finally, when all the lower portion of the building had been minutely but fruitlessly examined, the party ascended to the

church-tower, or steeple. It contained no bell, and was used for no purpose whatever; indeed, few of the members of the church had ever entered it. The door was found securely locked, but bore evidence of having been recently forced open, there being marks of a chisel or some like instrument upon both door and casing. The officers lost no time in gaining an entrance. Accustomed as they were to awful and heart-rending scenes, they fairly started back at the horrid sight which was revealed by the flickering light of a match, the place being quite dark.

Upon the floor of the lower room of the tower, just inside the door, lay the outraged, nude and bloated remains of what had once been a beautiful and cultivated girl, Blanche Lamont. A glance told the experienced searchers how the unfortunate young lady had met her death. About her neck were blue streaks, the marks of the strong, cruel fingers that had been imbedded in her tender flesh, choking out her young life. The face was fearfully distorted, the mouth being open, exposing the pearly teeth, and attesting the terrible death the poor girl had died. Her hair, which lay in disorder about her shoulders, was matted with blood and dirt. Altogether, it was a most gruesome sight.

The clothing had disappeared, but a search soon brought some of it to light. Several articles were soon discovered on the joist above the room where the body lay. The disposition that the wretch had made of the dead girl's clothing was one of the most curious things in this remarkable case. It was dispersed in as many places as there were pieces, no two being found together. Many articles were discovered in the shallow space above the auditorium, the murderer having evidently crawled around to dispose of them. A long time was consumed in this search; indeed, it was several days before it was completed. At length, however, every article that Blanche Lamont was known to have worn, with the exception of one of her gloves, was recovered. The church-tower was provided with shutters, which freely admitted the air, and, but for the discovery of the body of Minnie Williams, which suggested a further search, months, years, might have passed

without the cruel fate of Blanche Lamont being known. One of the most revolting features of this horrible case was suggested by the medical men who conducted the post-mortem examination. They decided that the outrages had occurred after death.

A stranger contrast can hardly be conceived than was presented in Emanuel Baptist Church that beautiful April morning, as the bells of the city began to peal for the Easter services. The auditorium below was decked with a profusion of flowers in commemoration of the Risen Lord. Above, in the dark church-tower, lay the disfigured and dishonored body of one of the fairest of all the flock of believers that had been wont to meet before the altar below.

Everything now pointed more strongly than ever to the guilt of the young student, who was away playing soldier, seemingly as unconcerned as the body of his victim in the church-tower. The finger-marks upon the throat had evidently been made with the left hand, and it was soon ascertained that Durant was ambidextrous, using either hand with equal facility. The head of the murdered girl had been raised by placing a piece of wood under it, or "blocked," in the parlance of medical students, who so arrange cadavers upon the dissecting-table.

The discovery of the body of Blanche Lamont created such an excitement as San Francisco has hardly known since the old days of vigilance committees. The day was bright, and the entire city poured into the streets. Thousands crowded around the church, rendered doubly uncanny by the latest terrible disclosure, while the streets in front of the newspaper offices were packed with masses of humanity, all struggling to get a view of the bulletin boards. So certain were the authorities that Durant was the murderer that they at once telegraphed to all the sheriffs and officers in the neighborhood of Mount Diablo, to look for and arrest the young militia-man.

About five o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday a dispatch was received announcing the arrest of Theodore Durant. He had been taken at Walnut Creek on the road to Mount Diablo, by Detective Anthoney, a San Francisco officer who had left

the city early in the morning. The officer reached San Francisco toward evening. The news of his expected arrival had been widely spread, and an immense crowd congregated at the ferry-house to await his coming from Oakland. The crowd clamored for the life of the prisoner, so intense was the excitement, and, but for the presence of a large number of police-officers, violence might have been offered to him. Durant was hurried into a waiting patrol-wagon and driven away to the city prison.

Upon the discovery and identification of the remains, the chief of police sent for the Rev. John George Gibson, pastor of the church. This gave rise to the report that the clergyman had been arrested, charged with the awful crimes, and for a time many believed him to be guilty, reports to that effect being telegraphed all over the country. Crowds surrounded the pastor's residence, extra papers were issued, and the wildest excitement prevailed. Nothing of the kind had taken place, however, the chief only wishing to learn what light Mr. Gibson and the church-sexton could throw upon the matter. Later, upon the trial of Durant, the attorneys for the defense undertook to asperse the character of this worthy man, broadly intimating that he was the real murderer. But the feeling against him had passed away, and his absolute innocence was almost universally recognized.

At the time of her disappearance, Blanche Lamont wore four rings. On Saturday, the day the mutilated body of Minnie Williams was discovered, Mrs. Charles Noble, the aunt of the missing girl, received by mail three of these rings wrapped in paper, upon which was written the names of George R. King, organist of the church, and Prof. Schonstein, who taught Blanche music. Experts declared that the writing had been done by Theodore Durant, who had made an effort to disguise his hand. It was afterwards learned that Durant had pawned the fourth ring, and these facts told heavily against him upon the trial. Foolish and reckless as these proceedings were, they were in perfect accord with the young man's strange behavior throughout the entire case. On April 19th the coroner's jury completed its investigations, and found

that Blanche Lamont came to her death at the hands of Theodore Durant. He was remanded to jail to await his trial.

The trial of Theodore Durant was intensely interesting, the court-room being constantly crowded. It began on September 1st, and occupied several weeks. Although entirely circumstantial, the evidence was very conclusive in its character and scope, and left no doubt of the guilt—the awful guilt—of the accused. One of the most interesting pieces of testimony was that of George R. King, the church organist. On the afternoon of April 3d, the day of Blanche Lamont's disappearance, he entered the church for the purpose of practicing some music that he designed to render on Easter Sunday. While playing the organ he was startled by an unusual noise, and looked quickly in the direction from whence it proceeded, when he saw Durant. The naturally pale face of the student was almost entirely destitute of color. It was bathed in perspiration, and he was trembling violently. He explained that he had been doing some work in the church. He had not been feeling well, he said, and the sound of the organ had somehow unnerved him. He asked King to go to a drug store in the neighborhood and procure some bromo-seltzer for him. The organist readily complied, Durant mixed and drank a portion of it, and the two left the church together, parting company soon afterwards. It is more than likely that King entered the church as the fiend was disposing of the body of his victim. What wonder that the organ, pealing forth the notes announcing the resurrection of the Savior, should unnerve the wretch, and send him to the auditorium to make sure of King's absence for a few minutes, that he might complete the work of hiding from view the tell-tale evidences of his awful work! Beyond all question he returned to the church as soon as he had gotten rid of his troublesome companion.

A lady living opposite to the church testified to having seen Durant and Miss Lamont enter the church on the afternoon of her disappearance. This lady had kept silent about the matter until the trial, not wishing to make herself conspicuous, and her testimony produced something of a sensation, and had great weight against the prisoner at the bar.

It was shown that Durant was not at the college to attend the medical lecture on that fateful April 3d. He had had one of his comrades answer to his name at roll-call—a not unprecedented proceeding, as some who have been students will admit. He had also secured the note-book of one of his friends, from which he made entries in his own. This point was strongly contested, the defense undertaking to show that he was present at the lecture, which would have impeached the testimony of some of the State's witnesses, notably the lady who saw him enter the church with Blanche Lamont.

For three or four nights after Durant was apprehended he was excessively nervous, often wakening up in the night, screaming with affright. After that, however, he entirely regained his composure, and remained cool and collected during the long trial that ensued. On September 9th he was placed in the witness-box to try to establish his innocence of the awful crime for the commission of which he was arraigned. His manner showed not the slightest concern; indeed, his wonderful nerve was commented upon by all present. He denied *in toto* all the testimony of an incriminating character that had been introduced against him. He admitted that he had been at the wharf on the afternoon of Minnie Williams' murder, and made the following weak explanation. He said that two days before the discovery of her body he was accosted by a stranger in the street, who asked him if his name was not Durant. Upon receiving an affirmative answer, the stranger asked him if he was interested in the missing Blanche Lamont. Durant assured him that nothing could give him greater pleasure than to ascertain her whereabouts, whereupon the other said: "Watch the ferries, then. She will try to cross the bay. That is my advice." It was to follow this advice and discover his missing friend that had caused him to go to the docks.

On cross-examination, Durant was badly muddled in several particulars. Asked why he had not communicated the clue he had received from the stranger to Blanche Lamont's friends, he claimed that he had had no opportunity. Pressed on the point, he was forced to admit that he had seen a num-

ber of her most intimate friends at the gathering at Dr. Vogel's on the night when Minnie Williams was murdered. More than that, he had conversed with the doctor, who, next to Mrs. Noble, had manifested the greatest concern at her disappearance. He said that he had not spoken to Dr. Vogel because it had not occurred to him at the time. Taken altogether, the testimony of the defendant tended to weaken such defense as his lawyers had been able to make for him.

Theodore Durant was the first criminal tried in California under the law which provides that fourteen jurymen be sworn in the case and listen to the entire evidence. The two in excess of the regulation twelve provided by the common law, are only to serve, and that in the order in which they are sworn, in the case of the death, disability or dismissal of one or two of the twelve regular jurymen. In his case neither of the two reserves was called upon to act, though both sat through the entire trial. Durant was ably defended, a little unscrupulously, it may be said, since the effort to persuade the jury that the Rev. Mr. Gibson was the guilty party, unsupported by any tangible evidence, was almost the refinement of cruelty. Such effect as this course had upon the jury was to prejudice them against one in whose behalf such unprofessional methods were employed. There is not in the mind of any candid person, informed in the premises, the slightest doubt as to the guilt of Theodore Durant, not alone of the crime for which he was tried, but of the murder of Minnie Williams as well. He was promptly found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged February 7, 1896. His attorneys took an appeal to the Supreme Court of California, but a new trial was denied.

To follow in detail the history of the Durant case would be to write a chapter upon the "law's delays." Blanche Lamont was killed on April 3, 1895, and Minnie Williams nine days later. The murderer was arrested on April 14, 1895, yet nearly three years elapsed before he was called upon to expiate his awful crimes. Appeals were taken to every court that could grant relief or delay, and to every power that could pardon or reprieve. Four times was the wretch sentenced to

death, the last occasion being December 15, 1897. Even then hope was not resigned, and a final appeal was made to the Supreme Court of the United States, which, at almost the last moment, declined to interfere with the tardy course of California justice.

Theodore Durant was executed on January 7, 1898, and met death with the utmost composure, protesting his innocence almost at the last moment. From the scaffold, beside the swinging noose that was so soon to launch him into eternity, his eyes often resting upon the face of his father, who stood in the large throng before him, the murderer spoke thus:

"To those who wish me to say something, I wish to say this: That I have no animosity against any one but those who have persecuted me and have hounded me to my grave, innocent as I am. I forgive them all. They will receive their justice from the Holy God above, to whom I now go to receive my justice, which will be the justice given to an innocent boy, who has not stained his hands with the crimes that have been put upon him by the press of San Francisco. I forgive them all, for I do not hold anything against them for it.

"I do not look upon people now as enemies. I forgive them as I expect to be forgiven for anything that I have done; but the fair fame of California will forever be blackened with the crime of taking this innocent blood, and whether or no they ever discover the committers of these crimes matters little to me now, for I appear before the whole world innocent, to proclaim my innocence for the last time, and to those who have insinuated that I was going to spring a sensation of any kind, I can say that there is no sensation other than that of which I have spoken.

"They must consider for themselves who wished to start up a sensation. That I am innocent I say now, this day, before God, to whom I now go to meet my dues. I am innocent."

Before his death, Durant made a profession of the Catholic faith, and was attended in his last hours and upon the scaffold by Rev. Father Logan. Rev. William Roder, who had been his spiritual adviser before he became a Catholic, expressed himself as entirely satisfied of the condemned man's guilt,

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though he did not say that he had ever made a formal confession to him. Mr. Roder spoke of Durant as a psychological monster, not to be classed with the ordinary criminal. The following, from the San Francisco *Call* of January 8, 1898, may prove of interest to students of heredity:

"The black cap when taken off disclosed a shocking sight. The face was almost black; the eyes half protruding, and the lips half open. The jaws were firmly, rigorously set; the features distorted. The parents kissed the lips of the dead. Mrs. Durant wept. Her husband mingled his tears with hers, and tried with her vainly to smooth the visage of their son into its former likeness. Everybody present turned to the windows to conceal their sympathetic emotions. When their eyes were again cast upon the scene both parents had taken seats near the coffin. Mr. and Mrs. Durant were chatting, and she was smiling.

"Thus they had remained quite a while, when convict Wilson, who is detailed to care for these rooms, approached and asked Mrs. Durant if she would not like a cup of tea. 'Thank you, I would,' was her reply.

"Instead of tea, a tray loaded with an abundance of everything the prison dinner-fare afforded, was sent to the coffin side. Here a table was spread within three feet of the corpse. The parents seated themselves and ate heartily; ate all unconsciously of every presence, living and dead; ate till they were sated. How they ate may be judged from the request overheard by the shocked and disgusted witnesses: 'Papa, give me some more of the roast.'

"After the remains of the unnatural repast had been taken away, they sat conversing until the body was borne from the prison."

The Durant murders and the shocking disclosures that followed, had stirred the people of the Pacific coast as nothing ever did before, and the rejoicing at his death was almost universal, and so intense was the popular detestation that no cemetery would receive his dishonored remains, which were finally reduced to ashes through the process of cremation.

It is difficult to classify the case of Theodore Durant. At first sight the homicidal impulse suggests itself as the moving

cause, and doubtless this is true, though other devilish inclinations were mingled with the desire to kill. After Durant's arrest it was learned from some of his fellow-students who knew him intimately and were themselves, very possibly, inclined to be a little wild, that he was not the exemplary person he had commonly been believed to be. Those in a position to read his real character considered him decidedly hypocritical, and took not the slightest stock in his claim of leading a religious life. To more than one of his companions he boasted of the intimate relations he had sustained with women. He told of trips he had taken to Carson City, in company with three railroad men, and how they had, upon one occasion, most brutally treated an Indian woman. This last matter probably explains, so far as it can be done, the ruling passion of Durant's life. His nature was doubtless perverted, the most unnatural and horrible ideas presenting themselves to his mind.

It seems quite likely that he murdered Minnie Williams because she had some suspicion, perhaps positive knowledge, of the fate of Blanche Lamont. In view of his strange conduct, particularly in sending the rings to Mrs. Noble, it is not at all unlikely that he told Minnie something about himself. Men capable of committing such outrageous and unnatural crimes are quite capable of boasting of their infamy; indeed, such a proceeding was hardly more reckless than to leave the mutilated remains of his latest victim where they were certain to be discovered the following day, and go off on a scouting expedition.

It was not claimed that Durant was insane, yet that there was something morally defective in his make-up is apparent. Cases like his do not, most happily, often occur, but their occurrence is frequent enough to show that "man is joined to the beasts of the field by his body," and may become something worse than a beast of prey, when he flings aside conscience, love of humanity and God, and resolves, no matter at the expense of what crimes, to gratify his bestial tendencies. The short life of Theodore Durant presents one of the saddest, most brutal pictures in the entire history of human depravity and crime.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PEARL BRYAN MURDER

"When lovely woman stoops to folly
And learns too late that men betray,
What art can soothe her melancholy,
What care can drive her grief away?"

Beautiful Pearl Bryan, a rustic yet most attractive maiden of Greencastle, Ind., fully realized in her own brief life and sad, tragic death, these words of Goldsmith. Murder is surely akin to lust, for it often follows fast upon its predecessor's heels, as is exemplified in the tragedy that had three States for its stage, the first act being presented in a quiet little city of Indiana, the second in the metropolis of Ohio, the third in the Kentucky thickets, near Cincinnati, and the fourth in the yard of the jail at Newport.

About eight o'clock on the morning of February 1, 1896, a colored boy by the name of John Hewling, the son of a neighboring farmer, while crossing the property of John Locke, near Fort Thomas, Kentucky, just south of Cincinnati, made a discovery that he will not forget while he lives; a discovery that sent him fairly flying from the spot. As he was hurrying along to his work, whistling merrily in the clear, cold air of the morning, he came suddenly upon a headless human body.

The form was that of a woman, who must have been beautiful in life. But the boy did not wait any close scrutiny, but ran to give the alarm, notifying a farmer, who, in turn, apprised the local police, and the body was removed to Newport, no great distance away. When found it was dressed only in a suit of union underclothing, and a cheap checked wrapper. The ghastly operation of removing the head had doubtless been performed with a view to preventing identi-

fication, yet, with a carelessness so often noticed in similar cases, lying near by were articles calculated to lead to the speedy and certain discovery of the murdered woman's identity. These consisted of a glove, corset and a pair of shoes.

The latter bore the stamp of "Lewis & Hayes, Greencastle, Indiana," and furnished the first tangible clew destined to unravel the awful mystery that enshrouded the headless form. Inquiries were at once made at Greencastle, and, four days after the discovery of the remains, all the articles of clothing, including even some hairpins, were positively identified as those of Pearl Bryan, by A. S. Bryan, a highly respected farmer living near the little city, and his weeping family.

A more awful or unexpected blow has seldom descended upon the heads of a loving and united family. The youngest child, Pearl, had been the flower of the flock, the universal pet of the household. At the time of her sad death she was twenty-two years of age, and went much in society, moving only in the very best circles. She seemed quite susceptible to the attentions of young men, but had no recognized sweetheart. She was regarded as of a cold rather than a passionate disposition, though likely to bow before the demands of a superior intellect. When Pearl Bryan left her home on January 26, 1896, she was regarded as a pure and guileless maiden, yet, instead of repairing to Indianapolis, to visit friends, as her family supposed, she went to Cincinnati, to become the subject of a criminal operation.

But, though the unfortunate girl's relatives and friends were blissfully ignorant of her wrong-doing, the Cincinnati authorities were not. A. W. Early, a telegraph operator at Greencastle, sent the detectives the following information: He had a friend in Greencastle, a young man named William T. Wood, the son of a prominent Methodist clergyman. This Will Wood had told Early that he had received letters from Scott Jackson, a dental student of Cincinnati, touching the condition of Pearl Bryan. Wood said it was necessary, in order to preserve Pearl's reputation, for her to go to Cincinnati, where Jackson would have a friend, a surgeon and chemist, to take care of her.

The detectives who had gone to Greencastle at once notified Colonel Deitsch, chief of police of Cincinnati, who caused Jackson to be located and arrested. This was on February 5th, the day after the identification of the clothing. This was most expeditious work, in marked contrast to that often done in mysterious murder cases. At the same time, it must be remembered that the clues were clear and distinct, and could not well have led to different results. When first approached by the officers Jackson talked quite freely, indignantly asserting his innocence. He stated that he had a roommate named Alonzo M. Walling, and the latter was sent for, but was released after being closely questioned, Jackson being locked up. A few hours later a Cincinnati reporter, who was working on the case and who seems to have been possessed of some real ability as a detective, decided that Walling had been an accomplice of Jackson, and swore out a warrant for his arrest, which was promptly served. The following day detectives who had been detailed to locate and arrest Will Wood, arrived in the city with the minister's son in charge, they having apprehended him in South Bend, Ind. Wood claimed to be innocent of all complicity in the murder, but admitted that he had sent Pearl Bryan to Cincinnati, that her shame, of which he was cognizant, might be covered up. He was released on $5,000 bail.

Jackson had formed the acquaintance of Miss Bryan during the summer and early autumn of 1895, in Greencastle, where he had gone to visit his mother, who was staying there. At that time he became very intimate with young Wood, whom he afterwards charged with having first led the young woman astray. Jackson spent the ensuing holidays in Greencastle, and learned the girl's condition. After this he corresponded with Wood, through whom he seems to have arranged to have Pearl come to Cincinnati. Wood made a confidant of the telegraph operator, and hence the entire plot was brought to light. Wood was subsequently surrendered by his bondsmen and spent some time in jail. He was afterwards released, and was an important witness against the murderers. He was rather a weak young man, who, like Pearl Bryan, fell under

the domination of Jackson's stronger will, but he surely had no idea that the girl's murder was contemplated.

Slowly but surely the coils of the law began to tighten around the two guilty students. A colored man, a waiter in a saloon, reported that Jackson and Walling, accompanied by a woman who answered well to the description of Pearl Bryan, had visited the place on the night of Friday, January 31, 1896. This was supported by the statement of the proprietor, Dave Wallingford. The waiter claimed to have heard Jackson say that night: "I would like to have a woman's head to dissect."

At this point the two wretches began to contradict each other, a course which they pursued until they appeared upon the fatal trap, something more than a year later. Walling admitted that he was at the saloon at the time stated, while Jackson claimed that he was elsewhere himself. Each of the scoundrels attempted to throw the blame upon the other. Walling told the officers that Jackson had killed the girl by giving her injections of prussic acid or cocaine, he did not know which. It is more than probable that her death was attempted in this manner, since cocaine was found in the body by the examining chemist. This Jackson denied, maintaining that Walling had agreed to perform the operation, and in doing so had killed her. Each, with the most solemn oaths, asserted that the other had severed the head from the body of the dead girl.

That both men were awfully, if not equally guilty, admits of no sort of doubt. Walling's trousers, taken from his locker in the college, were muddy and spotted with blood, while Jackson's coat, flecked all over with blood spots, was fished out of a sewer at the corner of John and Richmond streets, where the officers, acting under Walling's drections, located it. In Jackson's pockets were found six handkerchiefs, proven to have belonged to the betrayed and murdered girl.

All of the time that Pearl Bryan passed in Cincinnati was never satisfactorily accounted for. On Thursday afternoon preceding the murder Walling was seen with a young woman at the Central Union Station. It was tolerably certain that she had determined to return to her home and friends in

Greencastle, and that the unfeeling wretch, who had no motive other than to assist his friend Jackson to escape from an embarrassing predicament, or the gratification of the homicidal impulse, deliberately detained her until the last train for that day had departed. For a day or two after the murder Jackson carried about with him a valise. This was subsequently found, and was blood-stained on the inside, the theory of the officers being that it had contained the severed head of the unfortunate young woman. If this appears unreasonable, impossible almost, it should be remembered that Scott Jackson was a hardened villain, destitute of conscience and possessed of the most morbid fancies. It is very possible that he meditated dissecting it, as suggested by the colored man's statement. The head was never found, though large rewards were offered for its production, and the two murderers carried the awful secret to their graves. Jackson doubtless disposed of it in some way.

On May 11th, a Mr. Irvine, of Covington, Ky., visited the jail in Cincinnati, and identified Jackson and Walling as two men he had seen haggling with a negro, apparently about the price of some service, the morning that the headless body was found. From this time great efforts were made to find this negro.

It is seldom that the entwisted threads of a murder mystery are unraveled in an orderly and connected manner, the maudlin love for notoriety usually bringing some outsider into the plot. This occurred in the Pearl Bryan case. At a time when the authorities were moving swiftly towards the final solution of the dark crime a sensational and morbid woman appeared on the scene in the person of Lulu May Hollingsworth, of Knox City, Ind.

She came to Cincinnati and called upon the police, claiming to know all about the entire transaction. She stated that Pearl Bryan had met her death while submitting to a criminal operation, undertaken at her own request. Lulu claimed to know Jackson, and said she had received a letter from him in which he stated the spot where the decapitation had taken place. The letter stated that Pearl had died in Jackson's

room, and that he had hired a negro to take the body away in a buggy to the thicket near Fort Thomas, where Jackson was in waiting. There Jackson paid the negro to cut off the head, which he took charge of himself, throwing it into the river, from the suspension bridge.

Lulu claimed that she had once known Miss Bryan, and had met her in a railway depot a few days before her death, when she had made her a confidante of all her troubles. The police believed the story to be true, but an investigation of some of the statements demonstrated that they were entirely false. It was decided that Miss Hollingsworth knew nothing of the matter, it having been ascertained that she was devoted to everything of a sensational character. It is believed that she was induced to tell the stories she did by friends of Jackson and Walling, who hoped that the so-called disclosures might make in their favor.

Coroner Tingley, of Jackson county, Kentucky, held an inquest on the remains of the murdered woman on February 12th, the following verdict being rendered by the jury:

"First. That the dead body found on the farm of John Locke, near Fort Thomas, February 1st, is the body of Pearl Bryan, late of Greencastle, Ind.

"Second. That cocaine had been administered to the woman.

"Third. That the decapitation had taken place while the woman was still alive, and at the place where the body was found.

"Fourth. That Pearl Bryan, Scott Jackson and Alonzo M. Walling were last seen together at six o'clock on Friday evening, January 31st, entering a cab together at George and Plum streets, Cincinnati, and that the cab was driven south in the direction of Fort Thomas."

As to cocaine, Dr. W. H. Crane, of Cincinnati, swore that he had not yet completed an analysis of the stomach, but had found one-fourth of a grain of the drug and thought he would recover a full grain. He ultimately recovered two-thirds of a grain. Dr. Caruthers, who held the post-mortem, gave it as his opinion that decapitation had been performed while there

was still life in the body, and this view was supported by the evidence of twigs and leaves cut from bushes the morning the body was discovered. These showed blood-stains on the lower side, demonstrating that blood must have spurted into the air to a height of from two to six feet. This was regarded as very important, since the question of venue seemed certain to arise upon the trial.

Scott Jackson and Alonzo M. Walling were promptly indicted in Jackson county, Kentucky, for the murder of Pearl Bryan. Formal charges had already been made against them in Hamilton county, Ohio, but they were subsequently held as fugitives from justice. A requisition was obtained from the governor of Kentucky, and the prisoners were surrendered by the Ohio authorities and taken to the jail in Newport, the county-seat of Jackson county. There were threats of lynching, and extra precautions for the safety of the prisoners were taken. It all ended in talk, however, and no overt acts of violence were attempted.

A strong case had now been made against the students, but it is extremely doubtful whether it was strong enough to have secured their conviction, there being some links missing in the chain of evidence. How came the body at the lonely spot near Fort Thomas? Was Pearl Bryan murdered in Ohio or Kentucky? These were all-important questions, the last one particularly, since the evident defense would largely be one of venue. If tried in Kentucky, the defense would claim that death had occurred in Ohio, while if they were arraigned in the latter State they would set up the defense that death had taken place in Kentucky. Unless better evidence could be found, this would put the authorities in something like a dilemma, since a man can only once be placed in jeopardy. Fortune, or perhaps the conscience of a colored man, came to the law's assistance.

Jackson was the name of the most guilty of the two murderers, and he had been indicted and was shortly to be arraigned in Jackson county. By a singular coincidence the name of the new witness was also Jackson.

On the afternoon of February 15th, George H. Jackson,

private coachman for Major Widdekind, on McGregor Avenue, Mount Auburn, called to police officer Ed. Swain, who was passing where he was at work, and asked if the missing head of Pearl Bryan had been found. Informed that it had not been found, he asked if they had discovered the coachman, and was told no. Then he fairly startled the officers by asking him this question:

"If they should find the coachman would he be held for the crime along with the murderers?"

Swain diplomatically replied that he thought not, though this would of course depend upon the part the driver of the vehicle had played in the tragedy. Thus encouraged, Jackson told the officer his story. Later he repeated his remarkable narrative to Lieutenant Thornton, of the Mount Auburn police, and that night told exactly the same story to the mayor. Jackson was a man of good repute in Cincinnati. On the trial an effort was made to discredit his testimony, but it was not successful. His remarkable story, to which he afterwards adhered, and which was doubtless true, was as follows:

He was drill-master and commander of the Caldwell Guards, a colored military organization of Cincinnati. On the night of January 31st, he was engaged in drilling the company until about midnight. After dismissing the guards he was standing with others on the corner of George and Elm streets, in the "Tenderloin district," when a tall, dark-haired man, wearing a corduroy cap, came up and said:

"Do any of you fellows want to make five dollars by driving a carriage to-night?"

This was exactly in the drill-master's line, and he promptly accepted the offer. In a few minutes a square-boxed surrey, drawn by a gray horse, was driven up, and Jackson mounted the driver's box, the dark man taking his seat beside him. He was told that there was a doctor and a sick woman in the surrey, who were to be taken to Newport. The man with the corduroy cap directed him where to drive, and they crossed the bridge over the Ohio River and entered Newport. Jackson could not see the occupants of the carriage by reason of a drawn curtain, but he heard the voice of a man proceed from

the vehicle, and what he described as a "funny noise made by a woman."

After driving through the streets of Newport, Jackson became badly frightened, and made an effort to jump from the box, but the man beside him placed a revolver to his head, and said:

"You drive that horse, or I'll make an end of you very quickly."

The man took his name and asked him many questions about himself, telling him afterwards that if he said a word to any one about the transactions of the night he would kill him, and added:

"If we get into any trouble we have friends on the outside who would follow you up and kill you "

This badly frightened Jackson. After the arrest of the two murderers he constantly imagined that he was being followed, and fear kept him from disclosing what had occurred to the authorities.

"The man on the seat directed me how to go," he said, in his statement to the mayor. "It was a very crooked road. We came out at last, where they told me to stop. There were some thickets near by. They said the house where the woman was to go was not very far away. They would take her across there, and would whistle when they were ready to go back. They told me to turn the horse around and wait for them. The man in the surrey got out first and helped the woman. She leaned on him heavily, and as she walked dragged her feet. It was too dark for me to see anything. The man who got out of the surrey was not as tall as the man who sat by me. The man got off his seat and assisted in taking the woman away in the darkness.

"I looked for a hitching-block, and expected to find a round one; instead of that I found a piece of railway rail about a foot long, with two holes in it. I hitched the horse to that and waited a little while. I heard a very queer noise, something like scuffling in the leaves, along with a noise that I cannot describe, that I think was made by a woman. It sounded like a woman's cry in distress. I remembered the strange noise

that the woman had been making all the way out. The noise that I heard in the thicket frightened me, and I ran away as hard as I could run. I got home on foot about 4:30 o'clock in the morning.

"I didn't see anything more of them. When I heard of this murder I thought it must be the same case. I was afraid to talk on account of the threats made. At last I thought I ought to talk about it, and tell all I knew. I did not see any of these parties, either the men or the woman, so that I could recognize their faces. The man on the seat beside me had a big overcoat on him, and I could not tell whether he was slender or not. All three wore dark clothing, and the woman wore a veil over her face. Before I started from Cincinnati the carriage was driven to me, closed all around, at the corner of George and Elm streets."

Late that night Jackson was taken to the jail in Cincinnati, and without the slightest hesitation picked Walling out of about thirty prisoners who had been hastily assembled to test him. After looking him over very critically for a minute or two he declared: "I am sure this is the man who was on the seat with me, but if I could hear his voice I could tell better." Walling was ordered to speak, and to repeat the threats Jackson claimed he had made. When he had done this the negro said:

"That's his voice, only it's a little stronger."

As to Scott Jackson, the coachman was not so certain. He had only seen him in the darkness, and could not select him, but he pointed to several men of about his size—Jackson was five feet and six inches in height, Walling five feet and nine inches. When Jackson was brought forward and made to speak, the negro declared that his voice was like that of the man in the surrey, who had once ordered him to turn around.

The next day detectives Grim and McDermitt discovered in the stable of the Walnut Hill Cab Company a rockaway and a gray horse that had been let out on the night of the murder to a man answering to the general description of Walling. Jackson did not at first recognize this as the vehicle he had driven to Fort Thomas at the muzzle of a revolver, but when

a curtain was adjusted he declared it to be the same, and was about equally certain as to the horse.

Late that night a procession of a number of carriages, filled with police officers and reporters, started from Cincinnati for the scene of the murder, Jackson taking the lead with the gray horse and the rockaway. At the Newport bridge another link in the awful chain of evidence was forged. Toll-collector Tarvin said he remembered that a surrey driven by a colored man passed over the bridge about one o'clock on the morning of February 1st. It contained a man and a woman, and a white man sat beside the driver.

Jackson stopped his horse about two hundred yards from the spot where the body was found. "Here," said he, "is where they left me with the woman." Standing there he dramatically repeated his story. When he mentioned having hitched the horse to the short piece of railway iron, one of the officers suddenly recalled the circumstance that the bloody coat of Jackson, found in the catch-basin at the corner of John and Richmond streets, was wrapped about a piece of railway iron that exactly corresponded to the negro's description of the one to which the gray horse was hitched, when he ran away from the scene of the awful murder. What gave this incident great force was the circumstance that no mention of the railroad iron had been made in any of the papers, and Jackson could not have heard of it.

A few days after the murder the keeper of a disreputable house in Cincinnati called at police headquarters and told the officer in charge that on the night of Sunday, February 2d, a man had come to her house and left a pair of bloody overshoes under a sofa. These shoes were found to exactly fit Walling, and the woman positively identified him as the man who had left them in her place.

The statement of the colored coachman produced a decided effect upon Will Wood, who was then in jail. He had been decidedly reticent, but on February 20th he made a full statement of his connection with the affair. He had destroyed all the letters received from Jackson, but had read them so frequently and attentively that he claimed he accurately remem-

bered their contents. He repeated two of them. The first ran as follows:

"Hello, Bill. I expect you think I have forgotten you, but I haven't. I have been awfully busy this week. I have not been over to Kentucky yet, so you may know that I have been very busy. I work all day in the college, and then in the dissecting room, so you see I am busy for sure. Well, for business. Tell Bert to come on. I have a very nice room with a very nice old lady. A friend of Walling is going to do the work, an old hand at the biz. We go to his house to-night for supper. He is a chemist. I think I will have enough money, but tell Bert to bring all she can, for it may come handy. Tell her to leave G. C. so as to get here Monday night. Tell her she can go home in four or five days. Push it along. Don't go back on me now when I am this near out of my trouble. Be sure and burn this as soon as read. Your chum, always. D."

Wood gave the second letter in these words:

"Hello, Bill. Be awful careful what you say. I am expecting trouble. Oh, Lord, stand by me. Do you think Doc will? Write him. I made a big mistake, and it's going to get me in trouble. Don't forsake me now. Now is when I need you most. Write Doc. He'll stand up for me, won't he? Say, Bill, I wish I had never seen that girl and never seen G. C. —— my tough luck anyway. Be sure and burn this. Don't let any one see it. Now, Bill, stand by your old chum. D."

The two prisoners were granted separate trials. That of Scott Jackson began in Newport on April 22d, 1896, and lasted three weeks. Commonwealth Attorney A. R. Lockhart conducted the prosecution. He had several assistants, among them Attorney Hayes of Greencastle, who was employed and paid by Pearl Bryan's father, A. S. Bryan. Col. L. J. Crawford defended Jackson. He made a strong effort to show that Miss Bryan had died in Cincinnati and her body been brought to Kentucky after life was extinct, but in this he failed. A strong attack was made upon the testimony of George H. Jackson, several colored men swearing that they had been in his company until two o'clock on the Morning of February 1st.

But Colonel Crawford's defense, though the best that could have been presented, proved unavailing, and on May 14th Scott Jackson was found guilty of the murder of Pearl Bryan and sentenced to death. Alonzo Walling took a change of venue to an adjoining county, where he was tried soon afterwards, found guilty and also sentenced to death. He was brought back to Newport and placed in jail to await execution.

The condemned men had friends and appeals were taken to the Supreme Court of Kentucky. New trials were denied, and they were sentenced to be hanged on March 20, 1897. Great efforts were made to save their lives, strong appeals being made to Governor Bradley for a commutation of sentence to imprisonment for life. But the chief executive steadfastly declined to interfere with the course of justice. Especial efforts were made in behalf of Walling. It was claimed that he was a weak man mentally, that he had no motive to commit the crime, and had been led, forced, into it, by the dominant will of Jackson.

As the day fixed for their execution drew near, the papers were full of alleged confessions, made and shortly to be made, by the two men, each of whom continued to throw the blame upon the other. On the morning of the execution Jackson made a statement to the effect that Walling was innocent, but learning that, in no event, would this secure clemency for himself, he withdrew the confession, and stubbornly maintained his own entire innocence.

The sheriff had arranged to have the hanging take place at seven o'clock in the morning, but, thinking that Governor Bradley might grant a respite upon Jackson's confession exonerating Walling, he delayed matters for some two hours, when, learning that clemency would not be extended, he ordered the execution to proceed.

Both men met their fate with seeming indifference, the stoicism that had attended them since the hour of their arrest remaining until the last. From the scaffold they both asserted their innocence. Asked if he had anything to say, Jackson replied: "Only this; I am not guilty of the crime for which I am now supposed to pay the penalty of the law."

To the same question Walling replied: "Nothing to say, only you are about to take the life of an innocent man. I call upon God to be my witness."

With this falsehood upon their lips, the two hardened wretches shot through the double trap and met death by slow strangulation.

Nothing had ever stirred the people of Cincinnati and the country surrounding to compare with the Pearl Bryan tragedy, and almost universal satisfaction was manifested when the murderers suffered the extreme penalty of the law. All the parties were young; Jackson was twenty-eight, Walling twenty-one, while their fair victim was twenty-two years of age. Whether Jackson designed to murder the girl when he induced her to come to Cincinnati will never be known, though the brutal manner in which he took her life argues that the impulse to kill was strongly developed in him. The case of Walling is even more doubtful. He had no object, other than friendship for Jackson, to engage in the most unnatural crime. It is said that the formation of his skull bore a remarkable resemblance to that of the wholesale murderer and monster, H. H. Holmes, whose hideous crimes are detailed elsewhere in the present volume.

There seems to have been a strong affinity between these two young men, and that it arose from a common lack of all moral principle, a fiendish and most unnatural disposition, cannot well be doubted. Neither of them ever manifested the slightest remorse, and it is not likely that they felt any. Both came from normal and respectable parents, and the ordinary rules of degeneracy can scarcely be applied to them. The light regard in which they held human life and the brutal manner in which they consummated the terrible crime, argue that they were both victims of the homicidal impulse.

PEARL BRYAN AND HER MURDERERS.—PAGE 475.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE GULDENSUPPE TRAGEDY

"Truth is stranger than fiction." Thus runs the old aphorism, to which may well be added the statement that crime is often as artificial, as extravagant, as unreasonable, as the weirdest tale told by the cheapest and most sensational of novel-writers. This may well be chargeable to two causes. The novelist copies nature, endeavors to make his narrative plausible, probable even, by studying history and following precedents. On the other hand, the criminal often copies fiction, taking his cue, his entire plan sometimes, from a sensational novel. Thus fact and fiction act and react upon each other; thus fact is often quite as strange as fiction, the details of a crime more gruesome and, from the standpoint of a practical man, as unreasonable, as incomprehensible, as the wildest plot evolved in the mind of a sensational story-writer.

The Guldensuppe tragedy, enacted in New York in 1897, might well have been a drama, written for the boards of a third-class theatre, where morbid tastes are catered to and probabilities disregarded. Lust, cupidity, revenge—three of the strongest motives that lead to the commission of infamous crimes—were all present, and strangely blended. All the actors in this fearful tragedy belonged to the lower, the vicious and reckless walks of life, and it seems altogether probable that fiction of the "half-dime-library" variety suggested the means employed for perpetrating the revolting crime and disposing of the murdered man's remains.

The Guldensuppe case is, however, remarkably like two of the most famous murders ever perpetrated in this country, set forth at length in the present volume, and, but for the ignorance of the principal actors, might well have been inspired by

them. As in the Cronin case, a house was rented for the sole purpose of committing the crime, and the victim lured there to meet his death, while the method adopted for disposing of the remains suggested those employed by Dr. Webster half a century ago in Boston.

No elaborately planned murder, the details of which were worked out in exact accordance with the prearranged programme, was ever more quickly discovered, more completely laid bare.

On the afternoon of Saturday, June 26, 1897, two adventurous boys, James McKenna and John McGuire, thirteen and fourteen years old respectively, were running the chance of arrest by swimming in the East River, near the foot of Eleventh street, New York. Suddenly they saw a bit of flotsam in the shape of a corded package floating in the river, well out from the pier, towards which they at once swam. Bringing it to the pier, they dressed themselves and proceeded to open it. They were horrified at discovering what, even to their inexperienced eyes, was plainly a mass of human flesh, and shouted lustily for the police. An officer appeared, drove the boys away, and hastily examined their gruesome "find."

This consisted of the upper portion of a human body. It had been thrice wrapped; first in a piece of cheese-cloth, then in a bright red and gold oil-cloth, lastly in a heavy brown paper. From the breast of the trunk quite a large portion of the skin had been flayed away. No thought of murder crossed the mind of the policeman, who set it down as one of those senseless, horrible pranks so often played by medical students. He re-wrapped the fearful object and conveyed it to the morgue.

The next day Herbert and Edgar Meyer, the thirteen and eight year old boys of Julius Meyer, accompanied their father to Ogden's Woods, on the Harlem River, above the Washington bridge. While searching for berries the boys came upon a neatly-wrapped bundle in the woods, and shouted for their father. Removing a brown paper, oil-cloth and cheese-cloth, the astonished man discovered the lower portion of a human body. Taken to the morgue, it was found to exactly fit the

chest already there. The wrappings which had enclosed the two portions were identical, they had been found many miles apart, no doubt remaining but that an awful crime had been committed.

The police system of New York City is an admirable one. In some noted cases, like that of the Nathan murder, it has failed to detect the perpetrators of outrageous crimes, but it is composed of shrewd and experienced men who seldom fail in their work, particularly where tell-tale clues are actually thrust upon them.

The mutilated remains were first critically examined by seven of the most famous medical and surgical experts of the metropolis. They determined that the body was that of a man between thirty-five and forty years of age, weighing from 165 to 170 pounds, his probable height being five feet and from eight to ten inches. The muscles, which were well developed, indicated a large amount of exercise, while the absence of callosities on his well-formed hands, showed that he had not been engaged in any kind of hard manual labor. Death had been sudden, and not the result of illness or drowning.

The dismemberment had been skilfully done, and seemed to indicate some knowledge of anatomy on the part of the operator. The lower portion of the body was separated below the fifth rib, and carried with it the upper part of the legs. Evidences of haste were manifest, but the work had not been bunglingly executed. On one of the fingers there was the scar of an old surgical operation.

Great mysteries put the newspapers of the country on their mettle. In the professional opinion of the author, reporters often do irreparable injury to criminal cases by making premature disclosures and putting suspected persons upon their guard. In this case, however, their work ably seconded that of the police department.

Late on the evening of Monday, June 28th, a reporter for the *Journal*, in a bar-room at 672 Third Avenue, overheard two "rubbers" in the Murry Hill Turkish Baths talking of the mysterious headless trunk, which had set all New York agog.

In conclusion one of them casually remarked: "Willie hasn't been to work to-day."

"Not since Friday," the other added. "I wonder what he's up to."

This reporter had a nose for news; besides, it occurred to him that the strong muscles and white hands now in the morgue might well have suited the calling of the two men whose idle conversation he had heard. He lost no time in reaching the Murry Hill Baths. There he learned that the man spoken of as "Willie" was William Guldensuppe, a masseur in the baths. He had been absent since the preceding Friday, and the superintendent knew nothing of the cause, though a woman had called to say that he had given up his situation.

Guldensuppe had been long employed there, and the reporter had no trouble in securing an accurate description of his person, since he had worked there in an almost nude condition. This corresponded remarkably well with that of the surgeons who had examined the mutilated remains at the morgue, and the conjecture became almost a certainty when the reporter learned that the missing man, who had once been a sailor, had the head and bust of a woman tattooed upon his breast, and that a felon on the forefinger of his left hand had left a bad scar.

As a rule reporters are not diffident. About one o'clock on the morning of Tuesday this one was ringing the door-bell of a flat at No. 439 Ninth avenue, the residence of a German midwife, known as Mrs. Augusta Nack, where the missing Guldensuppe had been living for the past eighteen months. At length the midwife, who was completely dressed, responded to his repeated ringings and admitted him.

The reporter claimed to be a friend of Guldensuppe who had some work for him. The woman talked quite freely. William had dressed himself in his best clothes on Friday morning, secured fifty dollars from her and gone away, since which time she had not seen him. She ridiculed the suggestion that he might be dead and said that she didn't care if he were, since he was too much taken with other women.

Mrs. Nack, a large, voluptuous-looking woman of middle age, declared that she had detected William in the act of making an appointment with a woman friend of hers, since which moment her love for him had departed. She claimed to have received a note from him after his departure, also a telegram, both of which she had destroyed. He had also visited the flat during her absence, as was evidenced by a collar he had worn away.

In the meantime, five employés of the bath-room visited the morgue and positively identified the remains as those of William Guldensuppe, as also did a physician who had, a few months before, operated on his finger for a felon, and who knew the scar.

Mrs. Nack was not immediately arrested, though she was at once placed under strict police surveillance. In the meantime, much of her antecedents and recent history was brought to light.

It was learned that she had long been a grossly immoral woman, who seemed to possess a strange attraction for men. She had married Herman Nack some years before, but her continual amours had caused him to leave her. Although unlicensed, she carried on the business of a midwife, and, being altogether unscrupulous in her methods, made considerable money.

In 1893 a dapper little barber, known as Martin Thorn, but whose real name was Torzewski, came to board with her at No. 629 Ninth avenue. Two years later Guldensuppe also came to board with her. Both men were violently infatuated with the false wife, and many quarrels ensued. It was at this time that Nack took his departure. After this the stalwart Guldensuppe turned the little barber out of the house, and removed with Mrs. Nack to No. 439 Ninth avenue. This was about the close of 1895.

But Martin Thorn retained a place in the affections of the depraved woman, and visited her at night when the masseur was at work. Guldensuppe earned only ten dollars a week, but Mrs. Nack supplied him quite liberally with money. She also gave Thorn money, usually small sums. Finally the two

men met in the flat, and the fight ensued in which the barber was badly beaten by the masseur and forcibly ejected from the place. The former swore to have revenge. In the meantime, the midwife became violently jealous of Guldensuppe. Thus arose the three-fold motive to commit the awful crime—revenge, jealousy, and the desire to have the spending of the woman's quite large income.

In the days that followed the discovery of the remains, the police were very active, scores of men being employed on the case. The oil-cloth in which the dismembered body had been wrapped was identified as "Diamond B, No. 3220," made by H. F. Buchanan. Through the wholesale house this oil-cloth was traced to hundreds of stores in New York. After a long search the detectives found the particular shop where the oil-cloth had been sold. It was in Jane street, Astoria, and was kept by Max Rigor. Mrs. Rigor remembered that on the day when Guldensuppe disappeared she had sold a piece of this particular pattern to a stout German woman, who had also purchased six yards of white ticking. Mrs. Rigor positively identified Mrs. Nack as the purchaser.

Directly after the call of the reporter, the frightened woman had begun preparations for flight, and when the detectives called on Wednesday morning they found the flat in the utmost confusion. A search revealed a broken saw, a pistol and a stained knife.

Just at that time the missing legs of the murdered man were discovered floating near the Cobb dock, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Here, for the third time, small boys were the finders. Some lads saw a floating package and called the attention of sailors on the Vermont to it. The dismembered legs were wrapped in the white duck and oil-cloth that Mrs. Nack had purchased in Jane street. The legs exactly fitted the trunk, and the identification was complete, although the head was never discovered.

A long examination of the midwife, who was now taken into custody, led to no disclosures of value to the police. As a climax she was suddenly confronted with the recently recovered limbs of her late lover. But the dramatic incident

was barren of results, not a tremor crossed the woman's hard face. On July 1st she was arraigned in the Jefferson Market Police Court, and remanded to the custody of the police in the station. The next day eight sheets of brown paper, like that in which the remains had been wrapped, were found in her flat.

The fact of the murder was now clear, and the place where it had been committed became the great question. Employés of the Murry Hill Bath House remembered that William had told them that he and Mrs. Nack contemplated the establishment of a baby farm at Woodside, Long Island. This constituted a clue. Arriving at Woodside the officers found much of their work already done, since all had read the morning papers and notes of observation had been diligently compared.

Some days before the murder, a man named Haftner, who had charge of a vacant cottage at Woodside, which is near Brooklyn, and who lived near by, rented it to a man and a woman who gave the name of Mr. and Mrs. Braun. The description given tallied exactly with those of Thorn and Mrs. Nack; besides, "Braun" was one of the little barber's aliases.

The "Brauns" were seen to twice visit the cottage on Friday, June 25th. Once they alighted from a trolley car, and carried a roll of oil-cloth into the unfurnished house. Neighbors saw two men enter the cottage that morning, at different times, and only one leave it. On Friday afternoon a man and a woman, each carrying a bundle, departed together. The following day the "Brauns" twice visited the cottage on Long Island. In the morning they came on the trolley car and in the afternoon in a surrey, which Mrs. Nack had hired from an undertaker. Each time they carried away heavy bundles.

Entering the cottage, the detectives saw no visible marks of blood and nothing to indicate that a crime had been committed there, beyond the circumstance that the meter showed that an enormous quantity of water—40,000 gallons—had been used since it was last occupied. This was utilized in carrying away the blood resulting from dismembering the remains of the murdered man.

A day or two after the murder Martin Thorn disappeared

and the police were unable to find him. He was supposed to have left the city, and his description was telegraphed to all parts of the country and even to foreign ports, where he might well be expected to land from a steamship. He had not left New York, however, but was in hiding on the East Side, securing a room at No. 235 East Twenty-fifth street.

He was unknown there, and might, very possibly, have avoided arrest, but for one thing—he was a murderer. He soon became restless, and his room assumed the aspect of a prison. He formed some acquaintances in the neighborhood, and spent a good deal of his time playing penuchle in saloons. After a time he ventured into the neighborhood of his old haunts on the West Side. On Monday, July 5th, he called on an old friend, John Gotha, a barber like himself, who knew something of his relations with Mrs. Nack and Thorn. That afternoon he met Gotha at a saloon, and made a confession of the fearful crime he had committed.

He had rented the cottage at Woodside and gone there quite early in the day on June 25th, to await the coming of his victim, who was to be lured to the place by Mrs. Nack under the pretense that she wished him to look at the premises she had rented. Thorn went about the matter as if it were an affair of every-day occurrence. To avoid staining his clothing, he removed all garments except his undershirt and socks, and awaited the appearance of his victim.

About eleven o'clock Guldensuppe came with Mrs. Nack. She gave him the key that he might enter and survey the premises, while she remained outside. When Guldensuppe ascended to the upper floor the waiting and revengeful barber shot him twice in the head, killing him instantly. This done, he announced the circumstance to his accomplice, who left the premises after viewing the remains.

Thorn spent several hours in dismembering the body and tying it up in neat packages, employing the oil-cloth, duck and wrapping paper that Mrs. Nack had purchased. He also removed the tattooed face from the breast. About five o'clock Mrs. Nack returned, and they departed for New York, the woman carrying the clothes of the murdered man, her com-

panion his head, which was encased in a mass of plaster of paris. They crossed the river on a ferry-boat, and Thorn dropped the package containing the head into the water, where it doubtless sank from view. Mrs. Nack took the bundle of clothing home to her flat, where she burned it.

The following day they twice visited the cottage and carried away the three remaining bundles. Two of these Thorn dropped into the river and conveyed the third in the surrey to Ogden's Woods.

The police were already watching Thorn, for John Gotha had communicated with them, and soon after making the confession he was taken into custody. To the officers he denied having made any confession, and told a somewhat lame story explaining his relations with Mrs. Nack, at the same time protesting his innocence of the crime. On July 8th the two guilty accomplices were confronted by Gotha and six other witnesses, as a result of which they were committed to await the action of the Queen's county grand jury.

Martin Thorn was brought to trial on November 8, 1897. The facts as here briefly set forth were presented by the various parties, and, in addition, Mrs. Nack took the stand as one of the State's witnesses. For the most part her story agreed with the confession that the prisoner had made to Gotha. She claimed, however, that she had been influenced by fear of Thorn, and not by any affection that she bore him. Thorn hated Guldensuppe bitterly, and was resolved to take his life. Wicked as the woman had been, she was doubtless overwhelmed with remorse; she claimed that a guilty conscience had forced her to tell the truth, and that she did it without any understanding or hope of clemency. Her testimony, which occupied three hours, was the sensation of the trial, and seemed to settle the case of her accomplice.

But fate interfered to respite Martin Thorn; Juror Mangus Larsen became ill, and, not speedily recovering, a mis-trial resulted.

Three weeks later Thorn was again brought to the bar of Queen's county, being, as on the previous occasion, defended by William F. Howe, the well-known criminal lawyer of New

York. The same witnesses were introduced, with the exception of Mrs. Nack, who did not take the stand. On November 30th, the last day of the trial, Thorn was sworn and testified in his own behalf. He admitted that he had assisted in the awful transaction, but claimed that he had only acted as an accessory of Mrs. Nack, who had herself shot Guldensuppe. According to his story, the woman had ascribed to him the part she had herself played in the hideous tragedy. He had assisted her to place the body in the bath-tub, and had held it while she did the work of dismembering it.

The jury promptly found the defendant guilty, but sentence was deferred until the following Friday, when the penalty of death was imposed. After the trial Thorn is said to have made the following statement:

"I am glad it is over and the verdict given. I am convicted and am contented. It was I who killed Guldensuppe, and I believe every word Mrs. Nack said upon the stand was substantially correct. When I was on the stand I lied when telling the story as I did, but I lied to clear myself. It is no use carrying it any further. I am guilty and convicted. It is what I expected, and what I suppose people think I deserve, and perhaps I do."

Mrs. Augusta Nack pleaded guilty to the indictment against her, and was committed to prison for fifteen years. To the candid mind she was as guilty as Thorn, but her sex and her confession doubtless worked together to secure clemency.

Martin Torzewski, alias Thorn, was electrocuted at Sing Sing on August 1, 1898. During his long imprisonment he spent much of his time in reading and conversing with his spiritual adviser. He seemed fully prepared for death, and was, much of the time, in a state of apparent spiritual exaltation. But this deserted him in the last hour, and he died in a condition of the most abject terror. A current of 1,950 volts, 10 amperes, was employed, and death was practically instantaneous.

While revenge was doubtless the leading motive that led to the commission of this crime, the homicidal impulse was no

doubt present. It is shown by the comparatively slight provocation and the elaborate details of the plan, which argues a sort of fiendish pleasure in the plotters. Besides, the face of Mrs. Nack was decidedly and distinctively depraved; indeed, it corresponded almost exactly with the ideal criminal face presented by Lombroso. That she was vicious and depraved her own life abundantly proved, and it seems not unlikely that the impulse to kill was present in her heart, since, notwithstanding her own statement, and Thorn's admissions of its correctness, it cannot be doubted that she was the leading spirit in the dark and murderous undertaking.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE LUETGERT CASE

To secure personal benefits and escape punishment—these are the two-fold considerations present in nearly every instance where the murder of a fellow-creature is deliberately planned. The "benefits" to be derived may be vague, uncertain, absolute evils when rightly understood, yet they are possessed of sufficient potency to suggest a horried crime and "screw to the sticking place" the courage of the perpetrator.

Murders of this kind generally fall into three classes: Where an accidental or natural death is suggested; where homicide is apparent, with nothing to suggest the real perpetrator, and the disappearance of the victim under circumstances not calculated to throw great suspicion upon the guilty party.

Probably the last-named is the means most usually employed. According to the aphorism of the villain in the story-book, "Dead men tell no tales," yet a dead body often speaks louder and more convincingly than a living man, and hence the effort to effectually dispose of all evidence of a crime, to the end that the public may believe that the missing party has departed of his own volition. Disappearances are common and the guilty person generally sees to it that apparent reasons for the disappearance are not wanting.

Such an instance is presented in the famous Luetgert case, which sent a thrill of horror through the country, the entire world, in 1897. There was nothing peculiarly atrocious in the murder itself. Indeed, the means employed in perpetrating it were never discovered and are of little consequence. It was the unusual, the unprecedented, means employed to dispose of the remains that lifted this murder out of the

ordinary category of fearful crimes and placed it in a class by itself.

Adolph Louis Luetgert had grown weary of his wife, and preferred the society of other women. There may have been other motives, but this was surely the leading cause that led him to take her life. When we consider the vast number of married couples that live more or less unhappily together, this motive appears altogether too slight to account for the crime.

In the author's opinion, it was reinforced by the devilish scheme for disposing of the remains that suggested itself, exactly how will never be known, to the evil mind and conscienceless heart of the murderer. It suited the convenience of Luetgert that his wife should cease to live, while the horrid method of covering up the proposed crime attracted his inventive faculties, fascinated his wicked imagination, overpowered his judgment, stifled any feeling of humanity that may have lingered in his breast—in a word, delivered him into the possession of the awful impulse to take human life.

The risk was great, and the murderer well knew it. In any one of a dozen ways which must have suggested themselves to his mind, could he have more safely ridded himself of the wife who had become irksome to him, and, very possibly, stood in the way of a more advantageous marriage.

That he adopted the course he did argues strongly in favor of the theory that it was the sausage vat and caustic that induced him to murder his wife, not her obnoxiousness that suggested the disintegrating power of steam and potash.

Be that as it may, this volume contains no darker pages, nothing that reflects more severely upon poor human nature, than the following account of the infamous Luetgert case.

Adolph Luetgert was a German by birth, who came quite early in life to America, settling in the city of Chicago. He followed various occupations, including those of farmer, tanner, grocer, and saloon-keeper, and finally settled down to the business of manufacturing sausage. Luetgert was a powerful man physically, and possessed of considerable mental force and decided executive ability. Beginning in a small way, his enterprise prospered and he amassed considerable

property, owning a large factory, where he carried on a very extensive business.

The years following the panic of 1893 were far from prosperous, but the sausage-maker met his obligations and appeared to be making money. In 1896, however, he became greatly embarrassed, and with the beginning of the next year was obliged to shut down his factory, retaining only a few men to do the necessary work and guard the premises. Luetgert owed Foreman Brothers, of Chicago, quite a large sum, which was secured by a chattel mortgage, and expected that foreclosure proceedings would be begun in the month of May. In the meantime, he had not been inactive. Together with his friend and business adviser, William Charles, he used every means to secure capital to further operate and even extend his factory. At one time they seemed certain of success, and Luetgert expected to become the world's sausage king, but the plan resulted in failure, and the first of May, 1897, found him possessed of a most unquiet mind and confronted with seemingly unavoidable financial disaster.

His domestic relations were not pleasant. He had been twice married, his first wife having died many years before, leaving one son, Arnold by name, a young man at the time of the tragedy. For his second wife he married Louisa Bicknese, who had formerly been employed as a servant. By her he had two sons, Louis, aged twelve, and Elmer, aged five years. Notwithstanding his fearful crime, Luetgert seemed decidedly attached to his children.

His large factory was located at Hermitage avenue and Diversey street, in the northern section of the city, while his residence was near at hand, on Hermitage avenue. For a long time Luetgert had slept in his office on the main floor of his factory, one corner of which had been partitioned off for a sleeping apartment. He was an immoral man, and was often visited by women of extremely doubtful character. It was known that he did not treat his wife kindly, making, to all appearances, his servant girl, Mary Simering by name, the virtual mistress of his house. She it was who took care of his sleeping-room in the factory. Upon one occasion he was seen

to choke his wife and upon another followed her with a revolver, threatening to take her life.

On the afternoon of May 4, 1897, Diedrich Bicknese, a brother of Mrs. Luetgert, who did not live in the city, called at the house to see his sister. He talked with Mary Simering, but learned nothing satisfactory, beyond the fact that she was not at home. A visit to another sister elicited no information. Returning towards evening, he saw Luetgert and demanded the whereabouts of Louise, by which name his sister was commonly known.

The sausage-maker declared that he did not know, that she had left the house on the night of Saturday, May 1st, since which time he had neither seen nor heard of her. As nearly as he could tell, she had about eighty dollars in her possession. Asked by his brother-in-law why he had not notified the police, Luetgert replied that he had been greatly worried, and, not wishing to make a scandal, had given each of two detectives five dollars to look for her. That night Diedrich went to Kankakee, Ill., where he had an idea she might have gone to visit relatives, but found no trace of her. Returning next morning, he again saw Luetgert, who had no news of the missing woman.

Bicknese spent the remainder of May 5th searching for his sister, calling upon friends to whom he thought she might very possibly have gone, but without results; no one had seen Louisa Luetgert. That night he went to the Sheffield avenue police station and reported the matter to Captain Schuettler, the officer in command.

Captain Schuettler at once summoned Luetgert to the station, but he did not respond until sent for the second time. The captain knew the sausage-maker quite well, and at once began to interrogate him. The latter protested that he knew nothing as to the whereabouts of his wife, but thought it likely that she had wandered away, intimating that there was something wrong with her, as she had been acting queerly of late.

"You made a vigorous appeal to me to find a lost dog for you, not long ago," remarked the officer. "Why did you not report the absence of your wife?"

To this Luetgert replied that he had expected his wife to return and had wished to avoid the disgrace that must attend a disclosure of the facts. He departed, and the police began dragging the river and the clay-holes in the vicinity, in the hope of recovering the body.

On Friday, May 7th, police officers visited the sausage factory and interviewed Frank Bialk, a somewhat stupid old German who acted as night watchman. The story told by this man was a most remarkable one. It did not directly affect Mrs. Luetgert, yet it suggested to the minds of the officers a crime almost too horrible to be seriously considered; a crime the like of which they had never encountered. Frank Bialk's story, which he afterwards twice repeated on the witness stand, was substantially as follows:

Shortly after nine o'clock on the night of May 1st, Luetgert gave Bialk a dollar and sent him to a drug store, nearly a mile away, to purchase a bottle of celery compound. When the watchman returned with the medicine, about half an hour later, he entered the engine-room and found that the door leading to the main factory had been barricaded, something that had never been done before. Going to the elevator, he found the gate, always left up at night, closed down. Presently Luetgert appeared, took the medicine and change, and said: "All right, Frank," after which Bialk went back to the engine-room.

A little after ten o'clock the sausage-maker again summoned the watchman, gave him another dollar, and told him to go to the same drug store and bring him a bottle of Hunyadi water. The store was closed, which necessitated some delay, and it was nearly eleven o'clock when the old man returned with his purchase. As before, Luetgert met him at the closed elevator gate, and said: "All right, Frank."

In the basement were three vats supplied with steam, which were used for coloring sausage. About a quarter before nine Luetgert turned on the steam in the middle vat. He remained there until about two o'clock, when he turned off the steam and left the basement. Before leaving the place the following morning the watchman went to the office, where he

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found his employer fully dressed, and asked if he should let the fires go out. Luetgert told him to bank the fires at fifty pounds of steam pressure.

When Bialk reported for duty at six o'clock Sunday night, he noticed that water was running into the middle vat, through a hose that had evidently been attached for that purpose. He noticed upon the floor in front of the vat a sticky, glue-like substance, in which were what appeared to be flakes of bone. Standing near the vat was a chair that belonged in the office, and which had not been there when he last entered the place on the preceding evening. He shut off the water and went to the engine-room, where he found that the fire under the boiler was extinguished, the ashes having been raked out. Before daylight on Monday morning, acting under the orders of his employer, he started the fire under the boiler. It may be mentioned that, while the factory was shut down, a certain amount of steam was still required to run the elevator and for other purposes.

This report of the officers produced a profound impression upon the experienced Captain Schuettler, who instantly formed the opinion that an awful and most revolting crime had been committed in that dark basement with its running water and slimy floor. He sent for his superior officer, Inspector Schaack, and a search of the sausage factory was at once decided upon. This was made on Saturday, May 15th, and resulted in most important and horrible discoveries.

On the afternoon of that day, Police Inspector Schaack, Captain Schuettler, and three officers visited the factory, in the absence of the proprietor. They found the middle vat over two-thirds full of a brownish liquid. Pulling out a plug, they proceeded to drain the vat, having first arranged gunny-sacks to act as strainers, that all substantial matter might be caught and secured. In this manner they recovered many pieces of bone. In the meantime they filled two bottles with the gruesome, tell-tale fluid.

In scraping out the vat, Officer Dean recovered several pieces of bone, and, the most important event of the day,

found two gold rings. One of these was a small guard, or friendship ring, quite badly tarnished. The other was a heavy ring, clean and bright. It was a plain affair, with the letters "L. L." engraved in script on the inside. These rings were speedily and quite positively identified by several persons as having belonged to the missing woman, who had habitually worn them.

From Frank Odorowsky, known about the factory as "Smokehouse Frank," from the duties he performed there, the vigilant police gained further information which made clear the diabolical scheme that the uxoricide had carried into execution. That a connected narrative may be presented, it should be noted here that it was subsequently discovered that, on March 11, 1897, Luetgert had gone in person to the wholesale drug-house of Lord, Owen & Co., and purchased a large quantity of crude potash. This came in metal drums containing 750 pounds. The sausage-maker bought half a drum, and ordered it to be delivered at his factory. He also purchased fifty pounds of arsenic. What use he designed to make of this is not known, and the poison was never found.

The potash was promptly delivered in a barrel, and stood for a long time in the shipping-room. On April 24th Luetgert ordered Odorowsky to remove this barrel to the basement. He then told the man to break the potash, which he referred to as "the stuff," into small fragments, at the same time cautioning him to cover his hands, as it was "strong stuff" and would burn him like fire. Frank obeyed, and, assisted by another Pole, named Levandowsky, beat the potash into small pieces with a hatchet and a hammer, burning his hands and face quite badly in the operation. Then he placed it in three barrels near the vats, as directed by his employer. Later in the day he assisted Luetgert to place the "strong stuff" in the middle vat. That evening steam was turned on and the potash completely dissolved.

On Monday morning, May 3d, Odorowsky noticed slime on the floor in front of the vats, and manifested decided surprise. Luetgert said to him: "Don't say a word, Frank; don't say

anything about it, and I'll see that you have a good job as long as you live."

With this admonition and promise, Luetgert set the man to work cleaning up the place. The floor was arranged to drain directly into the sewer, and "Smokehouse Frank" disposed of all the residue he could in that way. The thick substance that remained he placed in a barrel, and, under the direction of his employer, dumped it on the railroad track near the factory, scattering it around.

Standing in the vat-room were three short doors and some gunny-sacks, the latter wet and slimy. It was the theory of the prosecution that these had been employed to tightly cover the middle vat, to the end that the heat might be greatly increased, thus causing the body of the murdered woman to more speedily disintegrate.

The floor cleaned, Luetgert directed the man to remove the ashes from under the boiler and strew them in the street. Where these ashes were dumped the police found what was afterwards positively identified as pieces of corset steel and fragments of human bones. The theory of the State was that the murderer had burned the clothing and larger bones of his wife, which explained his anxiety to dispose of the tell-tale ashes. Mrs. Luetgert wore false teeth, and a portion of an artificial tooth was found in the middle vat.

Why did Adolph Luetgert take all these precautions and yet permit the greatly diluted but still incriminating liquid, containing fragments of bone and his wife's finger-rings, to remain in that terrible "middle vat"? This circumstance was urged in his favor, and led many to doubt his guilt, yet the explanation is simple. He considered himself secure at first, and never thought of it afterwards. In the professional experience of the author, a criminal usually overlooks some point that leads to his conviction. But for the finding and identification of the two rings it is not likely that Luetgert would ever have been found guilty.

Upon this, and other incriminating evidence, Adolph Luetgert was arrested at his residence. Mary Simering had already been taken into custody, and he had secured the

attendance of Mrs. Agathia Tosch, an old and quite intimate friend, who was reputed to be wealthy. He was given a preliminary hearing and remanded to jail, soon after which an indictment was found against him.

Adolph L. Luetgert was arraigned for trial on Monday, August 23, 1897, before Judge Richard Tuthill. He was defended by Ex-Judge William A. Vincent and Albert Phalen, while the prosecution was conducted by State's Attorney Charles Deneen, assisted by Mr. McEwen. On August 28th a jury was secured. On that day a secret experiment was conducted at the Luetgert factory. The corpse of a man was treated to potash in the now famous "middle vat," the claim of the defense being that it was not disintegrated under the same conditions that the body of Mrs. Luetgert was claimed to have been destroyed. From this the defendant took great courage, loudly boasting that he was certain of acquittal. It was shown on the trial that the water used was not kept at boiling point, no effort having been made to confine the steam by means of the doors and gunny-sacks, as was doubtless done by Luetgert.

The task set for the state's attorney was a most difficult one. The body of the victim had been practically consumed, and yet it was absolutely necessary to prove, not only that she was dead, but that she had died at the hands of the prisoner, as charged in the indictment. To establish this by purely circumstantial evidence seemed altogether out of the question, and few of the thousands who had carefully studied the case believed that a conviction would ever be secured.

The formal trial began on August 30th, Diedrich Bicknese being the first witness. He was followed by Mrs. Luetgert's eldest son, Louis. On the preliminary examination he had stated that he had heard his father go out about ten o'clock on the night of May 1st, and did not afterwards see or hear his mother. His evidence proved a disappointment, and few were grieved that it was, since it seemed a hard thing to place a boy of twelve years on the stand to testify against his father, who was on trial for his life. On the trial he claimed that he had

heard his mother after his father had left the house, he being at the time in bed.

Mrs. Agathia Tosch, who, with her husband, kept a saloon near the factory, testified on the second day, and her story told heavily against the defendant. On the day after the murder Luetgert had come to her saloon looking tired, sick and greatly worried. He did not call again for nearly two weeks, by which time Mrs. Tosch had heard of his wife's disappearance and also that the police had visited the factory. She asked him where his wife was. He became greatly excited, and replied: "I don't know. I am as innocent as the southern skies."

This statement was remarkable, because no charge had been made against him. Before the murder, Luetgert had said to the witness, speaking of his wife: "I could take her and crush her." Upon another occasion, when he had sent for a doctor to attend his wife, who was sick, he said to Mrs. Tosch: "If I had waited a little longer, the dead, rotten beast would have croaked."

He afterwards told witness that he could not live with his wife, and upon one occasion said: "If it were not for Mary Simering I would not stay at home."

About four o'clock on Sunday, May 2d, a heavy smoke was seen issuing from the factory chimney. In the talk he had with Mrs. Tosch he told her that his engineer was talking too much about the smoke, and asked her to see him and warn him to desist.

After the officers first visited the factory and talked with Frank Bialk, Luetgert sent for him. He told the police, who instructed him to send word that he was sick. Luetgert came promptly to see him, and found the old man in bed. Officer Antone Klinger, who was concealed beneath the bed, swore that Luetgert's mission was to learn whether the officers had found anything incriminating in the factory, to which Bialk replied that they had not.

Several German women, who had known Mrs. Luetgert long and intimately, identified the rings as having belonged to her, while the chemist employed by Luetgert

testified that potash was never used in the manufacture of sausage.

Probably the witness whom Luetgert most feared to see take the stand was Mrs. Christine Feldt. She was a German woman, reputed to be wealthy, and an old and confidential friend of the defendant. The close relations that existed between them could not fail to give great force to any statement the woman might make. Intimations, very possibly unjust to Mrs. Feldt, were made that Luetgert designed to marry her after having disposed of his wife.

No wonder that the strong, pompous, self-sufficient sausage-maker paled when his "Darling Christine" was sworn and faced the twelve men who possessed the power to legally take away his life. After the commission of the crime he had intrusted $4,000 to her keeping, and from the jail had written a number of letters in which love was rather artistically blended with business. Money was the real point underlying them all, but they abounded in protestations of affection and terms of endearment. All of this money Mrs. Feldt returned to the defendant.

A long and fierce struggle must have been waged in this woman's breast before she consented to give testimony against her old-time friend. Luetgert did not believe that she would take this step, and his opinion was shared by many who knew her. But a sense of duty mastered her repugnance, and she seated herself in the witness-chair.

The hardened criminal actually blushed when his letters were produced in court and translated as read to the jury. Mrs. Feldt testified that the defendant had told her that he could not live with his wife, and had spoken harshly of her. "If you forsake me, Christine," he had said, "I will take my own life; I do not care to live."

One of the sensations of the long trial developed the following day, when Mrs. Feldt was recalled and identified a long blood-stained knife as one that Luetgert had intrusted to her care after the awful night of May 1st. He had made no specific statement, but the inference was plain that this was the weapon with which he had taken his wife's life. To have

kept such an accusing witness seems the height of folly, but it must be remembered that murderers do the most foolhardy things. Besides, Mrs. Feldt was the one woman on earth whom he implicitly trusted, and he doubtless thought to win her further favor by putting himself, in a manner, within her power, not believing it possible that she would turn against him. William Charles, the friend who stood by Luetgert to the last, afterwards claimed that he had given the knife to Mrs. Feldt, which did not greatly change the bearing of the incident, if true, as it undoubtedly was not.

Emma Schiemicke, a young German girl, testified that on the night of May 1st she was near the factory, accompanied by her sister. It was between ten and eleven o'clock, when she saw the defendant, accompanied by his wife, going towards an alley that led to the factory. This was strong connecting testimony, and was vigorously combated by the defense. Her testimony was greatly weakened under cross-examination, and was impeached by many witnesses, some of whom were, in turn, shown to have spoken falsely. Emma was a somewhat weak-minded person, and her testimony, supported at one time by that of her sister, was pretty well discredited.

Lack of space forbids the author from going at length into a discussion of the expert testimony, which formed one of the leading features of this most extraordinary trial. The residue from the vat was shown to be made up of animal matter that had been treated with potash, though no claim was made that the former could be identified as having come from a human being.

Many fragments of bone taken from the vat and from the street where the ashes had been thrown were introduced in evidence. Several of these were identified by leading experts as being fragments of human bones. These were: part of a human third rib; part of a humerus, or great bone of the arm; a bone from the palm of the human hand; a bone from the fourth toe of human right foot; fragments of a human temporal bone; sesamoid bone from human foot; one of the bones of a human ear.

The sesamoid bone and the one from the ear were most

positively identified, and for many days the word "sesamoid" was freely used by hundreds of thousands of people who had never heard the term a month before. It was essential to the State's case to prove that the body of Mrs. Luetgert had been reduced to slime and fragments in that horrid "middle vat," and no efforts were spared to convince the jury that the bones were human.

Other evidence, not already referred to, was introduced. "Smokehouse Frank" told how he had seen Luetgert kissing and embracing Mary Simering in the factory. Not long after the arrest of the defendant the contents of his factory were sold at auction, and a West Side druggist swore that he had bought at the sale a considerable quantity of the water for which Luetgert had sent Frank Bialk on the night of May 1st that he might get him out of the way. This evidence showed almost conclusively that the sending away of the watchman upon such an errand had been a mere subterfuge to secure secrecy for the commission of an awful crime.

To destroy the meshes of this incriminating web of circumstantial evidence, the defense labored hard, introducing many witnesses. They showed the results of an experiment made upon a corpse in the middle vat, but, as already suggested, the illustration lacked force, since the vat had been uncovered and the liquid was not kept at the boiling point. Besides, the resulting liquid was very similar to that found by the officers.

A large number of chemical and bone experts were introduced. For the most part the latter contented themselves by claiming that the bones introduced by the State might have come from any one of several lower animals. Some of these experts fared rather badly under cross-examination and, in general, their testimony was not very satisfactory. In the encounter of experts the State undoubtedly made the better showing.

Adolph Luetgert was not without friends, and soon after his arrest the missing Mrs. Luetgert began to appear in many places. She was seen in New York by a man who had known her well years before. It was confidently announced that he was to testify on the trial, but he was not produced. Several

witnesses from Kenosha, Wis., testified to having seen her in that city two or three days after her disappearance, and witnesses who had seen her at other points, were introduced. From a score of places came reports that the missing woman had been seen. The identifications were generally vague and uncertain, while the testimony was sometimes conflicting, and it did not make a favorable impression upon the jury. In the meantime, Inspector Schaack had offered a reward of $20,000 for the production of the woman.

This card, which the defense so largely relied upon, proved decidedly weak when played in the game. The thing was overdone. Too many Mrs. Luetgerts had been seen in too many places, and the jury were, apparently, not favorably impressed.

During the trial Luetgert bore himself rather well, assuming an indifference and contempt that was well simulated. He laughed and joked as if his only interest in the case was that of a light-hearted spectator. That he was possessed of an iron nerve cannot be questioned. He was extremely anxious to testify in his own behalf, and nothing but the determined opposition of Judge Vincent prevented him from doing so. Over this point Luetgert's attorneys came into open conflict, and at one time a rupture seemed imminent, since they had frequently disagreed before.

At length it was decided that the defendant should not testify, so far as possible his place being taken by his friend and adviser, William Charles. This man swore very hard, too hard, doubtless, in Luetgert's behalf, and through him was disclosed the real answer of the defense to the awful disclosures of the "middle vat."

Briefly, this was his story: Some hope still remained of getting capital into the business, and it appeared desirable to clean up the factory. To accomplish this it was decided to make a quantity of genuine old-fashioned soft-soap. Accordingly, the potash was bought and four hundred pounds of grease and bones purchased. The delivery of the latter was sworn to by a witness produced by the defense. Charles had assisted Luetgert to dump the grease into the vat. The

attempt had proven a failure, owing to Luetgert's inexperience as a soap-boiler.

This effort to wash away the terrible combination of facts that had been accumulated against the defendant proved a failure. The pretended delivery of grease was discredited by the testimony of the men working about the factory, none of whom had seen or heard of grease or tallow having been brought there. It was also shown that the factory was already in good condition and did not require scrubbing.

But the strongest evidence against this peculiar defense was furnished by the defendant's own witnesses. The material said to have been used by Luetgert in this experiment cost nearly forty dollars, whereas a barrel of soft-soap, an ample supply to scrub the building, could have been purchased for about one dollar. No argument is needed to show the utter absurdity of this defense. What could be more ridiculous than to suggest that a man, almost in a state of frenzy from past business reverses and impending foreclosure and total ruin, would spend an entire night and quite a large sum of money attempting to make soap enough to clean a dozen factories, and that when his own was in good condition?

Doubtless Luetgert's lawyers realized this, but it was absolutely necessary to make some explanation of the defendant's long vigil beside the "middle vat," to account for the bad-smelling, brownish liquid and the presence of bones. The explanation was singularly unfortunate, and seems to have been the one thing needed to convince the world, if not the jury, that Adolph Luetgert, having murdered his wife, deliberately disposed of her remains by boiling them in a strong solution of potash.

An effort was made to discredit the identification of the rings, but this was labored and weak, producing small effect. The policy of the defense evidently was to impress the jury that the case had not been established beyond a reasonable doubt. To support the theory that Mrs. Luetgert was alive and wandering about the country, they attempted to prove that she was not in a normal mental condition. The court limited efforts of this kind to one week next preceding her

disappearance, and, thus circumscribed, they were not able to make much of a showing.

After discussing the evidence for three days and nights the jury were finally discharged by the court as unable to agree. It is understood that the jury stood nine for conviction and three for acquittal. It was decided that the defendant should be given a new trial at the earliest possible moment.

Adolph L. Luetgert, having failed to secure admission to bail, was again arraigned for trial before Judge Joseph E. Gary, November 29, 1897. Before that time, Luetgert had quarreled with his attorneys, and new ones had been secured in the persons of Lawrence Harmon, John E. Kehoe, and Max J. Riese. On December 13th a jury was secured and the trial formally begun. On December 16th the judge disqualified one of the jurors for having, before being sworn, expressed the opinion that the defendant ought to be hung. His place was promptly filled and the trial begun anew.

During the second trial it developed that an attempt had been made to bribe the jury on the former trial, also that promissory notes given Judge Vincent by Luetgert to secure his fees had turned out to be forgeries.

On December 27th the stenographers employed by the defense refused to do any further work because they had no assurance of receiving payment. This led to much delay, and greatly prolonged the trial, the prisoner's attorneys insisting on taking down the testimony in long-hand.

On January 21, 1898, Luetgert took the stand and testified at considerable length, telling the story of his life with great particularity. He denied his guilt, and frequently shed tears. As to the occurrences of May 1, 1897, he told substantially the story that Charles had set up on the first trial. He had been making soft-soap. Upon cross-examination his memory proved very defective, but he admitted that he had never made soft-soap before, and had no idea as to its cost, had never used soft-soap for cleaning his factory, and had, in his grocery, at the factory, plenty of soap and scouring material.

On February 9, 1898, the jury returned a verdict of guilty of murder, and fixed the penalty at imprisonment for life.

Such a verdict shows that something of a doubt must have lingered in the minds of some of the twelve men, for if ever a crime merited the extreme penalty, that crime was committed by Adolph Luetgert.

The prisoner was a large, powerful and not ill-looking man, though his eyes were abnormally small. For the most part he maintained his wonderful self-possession during both of his long trials. In both instances he claimed to be entirely confident of acquittal, and on his last trial had made an engagement to attend a fancy ball, to which he had been invited, a pleasure which he was forced to forego.

Luetgert must have long meditated this crime, having purchased the potash nearly two months before he carried the plan into execution. The annals of crime contain few instances where preparations for a murder were made so long in advance, and the depravity of the wretch's heart may fairly be deduced from the circumstance.

Adolph L. Luetgert was an intensely egotistical man, who assumed a tone of superiority over all with whom he came in contact. The novelty of the plan appealed strongly to his vanity as its originator, and he doubtless thought that his superior intellect would prevent even suspicion falling upon him. In this peculiar vanity, which never deserted him during all his trials and perplexities, something of the habitual criminal may be seen.

Given such an awful crime as the one described, Adolph Luetgert was an ideal man to develop its details and carry them into execution.

CHAPTER XXIX

INFANTICIDE

Infanticide has been practiced from the most remote ages. If we are to believe some authors, it is a crime peculiarly fostered and encouraged by modern civilization; or rather by those vices, which, so far in the intellectual development of the world, have always attended mental advancement. That this has something of foundation in truth, we shall see later, but that civilization tends to increase infanticide in the aggregate is very far from being true. With the ancient civilizations it was differently regarded, and infant life was commonly held as of small value; but those conditions of society lacked the softening and elevating influences of Christianity, which have greatly changed the views of the moderns in many important particulars.

Infanticide is peculiarly the crime of the savage state. This is due to two principal causes: First, savages possess but a very limited feeling of compassion, and, second, their warlike and nomadic habits are decidedly unfavorable to infant life. Savage parents usually decide for themselves whether they care to raise to maturity the child for whose existence they are responsible, and if they do not, they either expose or put it to death in any manner that suggests itself. Brutal as this proceeding appears to civilized and enlightened men, it is more easily excused than is infanticide where gross sensuality is the moving cause. With the dawn of civilization this practice usually becomes rare; but the intermediate simple state of life passed, it increases in frequency. It does not, however, keep pace in its growth with the immorality of a people, but seems rather to depend upon how illegitimate children are regarded in a community, and what amount of condemnation

the public attaches to the erring mother. Following this rule, the destruction of infant life is large where immorality generally prevails and is commonly condemned. In civilized countries the mother of an illegitimate child will usually bear privations rather than destroy it, but is unable to confront the finger of shame, which very frequently proves stronger than the natural love she bears her offspring. In Spain, where female frailty is treated with the utmost leniency and a "misstep" excites no special comment, infanticide is almost unknown. Writing a little over a century ago, Henry Home, Lord Kames, says:

"In Wales, even at present, and in the Highlands of Scotland, it is scarce a disgrace for a young woman to have a bastard. In the country last mentioned, the first instance known of a bastard child being destroyed by its mother through shame is a late one."

Many savage and semi-civilized peoples have regarded their infant children as the most acceptable sacrifices that they could offer to the gods, and this notion has been directly responsible for the destruction of a vast amount of infant human life. This notion is not altogether a thing of the past, and this form of sacrifice is still offered up in many parts of the world.

To show what wonderful advancement has been made in public sentiment touching this matter since the days of the ancient civilizations, the case of the Greeks may be instanced. With them infanticide was very generally practiced, and few restrictions were attached to it. Indeed, it was enjoined under certain conditions, on the theory of securing the greatest happiness to the greatest possible number. As most readers are aware, the great philosopher, Plato, devised an ideal republic, for which he provided laws, calculated, in his own opinion and that of his intellectual contemporaries, to secure the welfare of the people. In this legislation he provided for infanticide, as also did Aristotle, in a somewhat similar scheme for self-government of a people. This was theoretical, but Solon and Lycurgus provided actual laws making to the same end. In this they anticipated the theories of Malthus, and

legislated for the restriction of population. Indeed, the satirical elaboration of the Malthusian theory, quoted in the second chapter of this volume, might well have been drawn from the serious arguments and actual practices of the Greeks. They regarded the ideal condition of mankind as free from helpless and unproductive members of society, and therefore decided that the painless destruction of infants whose parents were unable to adequately provide for and educate, was, on the whole, a benefit to the State. This was especially urged in the case of those infants who were deformed or afflicted with diseases that would make their mature years a burden to themselves and their friends.

The Greeks were extremely sensual, and their women, for the most part, of a low condition, intellectually and socially, which led to the general practice of what the greatest philosophers excused and commended. Besides, mothers have a much greater natural affection for their infant children than have fathers, and the low condition of the Greek women prevented their exercising a healthful influence over their husbands in this regard. But infanticide was not universally practiced, even in immoral Greece. In Thebes this offense is said to have been severely punished, death, under some circumstances, being the penalty.

Thanks to their peculiar religion and their almost universal desire to increase the population, after one of the earliest of the divine commands, the Jews strictly prohibited infanticide. The great historian, Tacitus, notices in terms of eulogy that the ancient Germans, though a rude people, did not allow infanticide.

The theories of the Romans differed greatly from those of the Greeks on this subject. While the latter wished to restrict population, the former sought to extend it, and the destruction of infant life was never common with the Romans until society had become corrupted and debased during the sensual days of the Empire. This appears remarkable at the first glance, since originally the Roman father had absolute power to commit infanticide at pleasure. But an ancient law, said to have originated with Romulus, restricted the rights of parents in

this regard, and prohibited the father from slaying any well-formed child until it had attained the age of three years. This was wisdom that suggests the famous judgment of Solomon in deciding which of two women was the mother of a child. It will be remembered that he decreed that the infant should be cut in half, at which the real mother recoiled in horror, thus giving him the basis for a correct judgment. In like manner, the Roman father was expected to have developed enough love for his child by the time it was three years old to spare its life. To lawfully destroy crippled or deformed children, the Roman father had to procure the consent of their five nearest relatives.

Under the Empire, the laws of the Romans strongly though indirectly discouraged this practice. This was done by granting special privileges to the fathers of large families of children, and also by exempting poor parents from the burdens of taxation. To a certain extent, also, provision was made for the security and care of infants that had been exposed by their parents. Notwithstanding all this, both Pagan and Christian writers agree in declaring that infanticide was a great evil during the Empire. A very broad distinction was popularly drawn between this crime and the exposing of infants. By exposing is meant leaving them in the streets, or elsewhere, to live or die, as might depend upon chance or the humanity of their discoverers. The exposure of infants was condemned by the Romans, but was not punished as an offense against the State. Certain it is that abandonment of infants was practiced on a most gigantic scale, and was generally regarded as a very venial offense. That much infant life was destroyed through this practice cannot be doubted, but probably the great majority of them were saved from death. They were brought usually to a famous column near the Valabrum, where they were carried away and educated as slaves, though many were diverted to purposes of prostitution.

On the whole, infanticide was condemned by the Roman people as morally wrong, but the laxness with which the laws were enforced, coupled with the low moral tone of the

populace, permitted it to flourish. It was not until the conversion of Rome to Christianity that any radical methods were taken to check this enormous vice. To the Christian religion must be ascribed the high distinction of having combated and reduced to a minimum infanticide and the exposure of infants. Not only are the fundamental principles of Christianity opposed to such practices, but the early Fathers of the Church, with one accord, declaimed eloquently against them. In the year of his conversion, Constantine issued a decree, at first applicable only to Italy, but afterwards extended to Africa, providing that the children of parents who were unable to support them should be maintained at the expense of the State.

In A. D. 329 it was provided that children that had been sold might be redeemed upon repayment by the father; two years later it was provided that foundlings became the absolute property of their preserver, and could not be released by the father. This last provision can hardly be regarded with favor, though doubtless meant for the public good, since it doomed the unfortunate child to a condition of perpetual servitude. Indeed, it does not compare favorably with some of the Pagan laws, which provided that the father, upon payment of all charges for expenses, might always reclaim the child he had abandoned. Further than that, the Emperor Trajan had decreed that under no circumstances could an exposed child be reduced to a condition of slavery. This law of Constantine continued in force until 529, when Justinian decreed that the person who found an exposed child could not deprive it of its natural liberty, and that, by exposing it, the father lost all legitimate authority over it. This law was limited to the Eastern Empire, and in the West, to a large extent at least, the servitude of abandoned infants extended for several hundred years, and was only discontinued when slavery was exterminated from Europe.

The civil wars into which the Empire was plunged under Constantine reduced the nation to sad extremities, and almost necessitated the revival of the old law providing that in case of absolute destitution children might be sold as slaves, which practice had never been altogether abandoned. The Fathers

of the Church denounced this practice, but no Christian Emperor interfered to prevent it.

As to the punishment for infanticide meted out by the Pagans of Rome, there has been much dispute, but the better authority is that it was regarded as murder, though punished by banishment, instead of death. To check infanticide in Africa, where vast numbers of infants were sacrificed to Saturn, Constantine made the murder of a child by its father the same offense as parricide. In A. D. 374, Valentinian made all forms of infanticide a capital offense, and likewise punished the exposure of infants. In the seventh century, the Spanish Visigoths severely denounced both infanticide and abortion, punishing them with death or blindness.

The early Christians did much to check this horrid vice. Always charitable, they devoted a considerable share of their alms to the care and education of abandoned infants, large numbers of which class were reared as Christians, but it was several centuries before Christian foundling hospitals were established. The first one known to have existed was at Milan, in the eighth century, though it is said that there was one at Treves as early as the sixth century. In the ninth century the Council of Rouen invited the mothers of children, secretly born, to leave them at the door of the church, with the promise that they should be provided for until reclaimed. It appears that such children were brought up as slaves, or serfs, and became subject to the church.

The institution of slavery appears to have been one of the principal supporters of the custom of exposure of children, and with its decline the barbarity became rare. The Christian doctrine of the intrinsic value of an immortal soul is principally responsible for the decline of infanticide during the middle ages. During the early centuries of the Christian Church, one of its crowning glories is the work it accomplished in the preservation of infant life and the consequent elevation of the sentiment of the world touching the sanctity of human life in general.

The crime known as abortion is so nearly associated with that of infanticide that a discussion of the latter without some

reference to the former is hardly possible. With the Pagans, this was looked upon as a very slight offense, and was, indeed, openly advocated in both Greece and Rome. Aristotle highly commended it, and insisted that it should be enforced by law when the population had passed a certain limit. Among the Pagans it was condemned by no law for many centuries. Both Christian and Pagan authorities unite in declaring that the practice was extremely common, and seldom resulted in unfavorable comment. A woman who never resorted to it appears to have been rare, and is spoken of by these writers in terms of highest praise. Indeed, during many centuries, the perpetration of this crime was a regular profession, both in Greece and Rome. At the same time, the really great thinkers and writers of Pagan times regarded abortion as unquestionably criminal and inexcusable on moral grounds. Among these may be mentioned Seneca, Ovid, Plutarch and Juvenal. "It was probably regarded," says Lecky, "by the average Romans of the later days of Paganism much as Englishmen in the last century regarded convivial excesses, as certainly wrong, but so venial as scarcely to deserve censure."

From the first, the Christians took radically different ground. Without exception they constantly denounced the practice as most inhuman, and unhesitatingly classed it as murder. By the Council of Ancyra, the sacrament was withheld from the guilty mother, even to the hour of her death, but this penalty was subsequently reduced to seven years' penitence. The enormity of this crime in the eyes of the early Christians was largely due to the doctrine that unbaptized children were condemned to eternal death.

What has been said of Greece and Rome is true of most of the peoples of antiquity, infant life being almost universally held at a very low value by the ancients. This is particularly true of India and China, where the practice still prevails to an alarming extent. All are familiar with the fearful practice of the Hindoo mothers in disposing of their infants, particularly the females, by throwing them into the Ganges to drown or be devoured by crocodiles. The amount of life sacrificed in China can hardly be approximated, but it is known to be

enormous. In that country infanticide is not regarded as morally wrong. Among the Norsemen the life of a child hung in the balance until the father, after examining it critically, handed it to the nurse to be reared. If it appeared weak, or ill-favored, particularly if a daughter, it was exposed to die of the weather or be devoured by wild beasts.

Even in our own times, infanticide prevails to an alarming extent among many peoples. Throughout the whole of the South Sea Islands child-murder is systematically and extensively practiced. Among the Fijians it was reduced to an absolute system, which probably prevails at present. It is said that more than one-half of all the children born in Vanua-Levu are destroyed in infancy. In India the practice has been abated somewhat by the stringent measures adopted by the English government. The Rajputs, it is said, destroy all female children but the first-born—a peculiar custom due to its being a point of honor with a Rajput to nearly ruin himself in the marriage feast and portion of his daughter, so that he could not afford to have more than one. The Mohammedans were inclined to the same practice, but effected their object chiefly by means of abortion.

The position of modern civilization with reference to infanticide is radically different from that entertained in ancient and medieval times. The maxim of the law touching human life, which is amply sustained by the sentiment of civilized nations, is that from its inception to its close it is a sacred thing, and that whoever terminates it is a murderer, or a criminal to be classed with murderers. Instead of favoring and encouraging the destruction of human life, as we have seen, was, to a certain extent at least, done by the ancients, our modern civilization takes a diametrically opposite course, and devises and employs all possible machinery to preserve and extend it. Not only is infanticide punished by severe penalties, the offense being classed as murder, but means are provided to reduce it to the lowest possible limits by presenting an escape from exposure and consequent shame, which, as already suggested, is the most fruitful source of infanticide especially in our times.

In the list of remedies provided by society for the suppression of this odious vice, the most prominent and the most successful ever devised is that of foundling hospitals, whose origin has been already referred to. These institutions became quite common in Europe nearly a thousand years ago. In 1070 a foundling hospital was established at Montpelier; in 1200 in Elmbeck; in 1212 in Rome; in Florence in 1317; in Nurnberg in 1331; in Paris in 1362; in Vienna in 1380. In France the utility of these establishments, which were the especial labor of Vincent de Paul, was early called in question; and letters patent of Charles VII., in 1445, affirmed that "many persons would make less difficulty in abandoning themselves to sin when they saw they were not to have the charge of the upbringing of their infants." In Germany the system of foundling hospitals was soon abandoned, the duty of rearing the children being, as in England, imposed by law, first on the parents, then on more distant relatives, whom failing, on the parish, and, last of all, on the State. The reproach made by the Roman Catholic countries against this more natural arrangement—that it tends to promote infanticide—is said to have been in no degree established by statistical investigations.

The Revolution introduced many changes in France, but the new government not only adopted the system of foundling hospitals, but greatly extended their scope, declaring all infants that had been abandoned by their parents "Children of the State," and providing for their maintenance and education. They carried the matter to a point that no doubt encouraged immorality, by declaring that every girl who declared her pregnancy should receive a reward of 120 francs. This ridiculous rule was abolished in 1811, but the system of maintaining illegitimate children was continued, and every town in France of any importance was provided with a foundling hospital and a turning wheel. This last was a mechanical device by means of which a child could be introduced into the hospital without the identity of the person depositing it being made known. The expense of rearing a child in one of these hospitals to the age of twelve years has been computed at a

little less than $200. When a child is received it is weighed, medically examined and registered. Nurses are provided, and many children are boarded outside the walls of the hospital. Under the old system in France an abandoned child might be reclaimed at any time.

The question of retaining the turning-wheel has provoked much discussion in France, and it has now been practically abolished. The principal argument in its favor is the claim that it tends to reduce the crime of infanticide by providing a means by which a mother can dispose of her child, with the assurance that it will be well cared for and without the shame of a public disclosure. On the other hand, it was strongly urged that such an arrangement placed a premium, almost, upon immorality, by providing a convenient means of escaping from its legitimate effects. At any rate, the turning-wheel was most liberally patronized. An official report by M. Gasparin, in 1837, showed that abandonment of children in France had increased from 70,000 in 1811 to 150,000 in 1837. Besides this, he demonstrated that infant mortality was absolutely appalling, and that such a vast number of people, without families, wealth or friends, turned out in their youth, swelled the already well-filled ranks of criminals and abandoned women.

Recently, the system in France has been radically changed, the policy being to assist mothers in the care and maintenance of their illegitimate children, rather than separating them. This has been found to work admirably, the number of exposures having decidedly diminished. At present there are considerably over a hundred foundling hospitals in France. They are numerous in Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Austria and Norway. Moscow and St. Petersburg contain the largest in the world. The Foundling Hospital in London was established in 1759. The system was never approved in England, and the London Hospital was changed in 1760 to an asylum for illegitimate children, whose mothers were known. There are but few of these institutions in the United States, and these are supported by private charity.

At the present time infanticide is accounted murder, and

punished as such by all civilized nations, the age of the party killing in no sense mitigating the offense. This crime is, however, an exceedingly difficult one to establish, since it must be proven that the child was born alive and subsequently murdered. Child-murder may also be accomplished in a negative way; that is, by neglecting to supply proper sustenance or care, upon which infant life depends to a very large extent, and the death of an infant through the neglect of those whose legal duty it is to provide for it, is a felony in most countries, and may be adjudged murder under some circumstances. Exposure of infants is now generally punished as a misdemeanor, as also is the concealment of the death of a child.

The outline presented of the history of infanticide plainly and convincingly demonstrates, what the author has frequently suggested and desires to especially emphasize, that the moral standard of mankind has been immensely elevated during the past two thousand years. While it does not of necessity follow that actual advancement has kept pace with the improved moral tone of the world, the circumstance is still of almost incalculable importance. While a people never rise to the full height of their best standard of morals, it is equally certain that they never surpass that standard. The civilization of the Pagans of Greece and Rome, particularly that of the better classes of the people, is hardly surpassed by that of our own time. While we exceed them in the matter of inventions and those industries that go to make up the temporal wealth and happiness of mankind, we hardly equal them in the domain of literature and art. Science has made wonderful advancement since the days of the Roman Empire, but refinement and taste have rather retrograded. In the field of morals, however, we are far in advance of the Pagans. As has been shown, many of the best men of antiquity either advocated or very lightly condemned infanticide, which was almost universally practiced; while in our day, no wretch is so debased but what he well understands that it is morally as well as legally wrong.

Many of the Pagan philosophers, both of Greece and Rome, were men of high moral standard and almost faultless lives,

Yet their standard depended entirely upon human reason, and was, of necessity, subject to bias and distortion. With the advent of Christianity a system was established that far transcended the power of man to invent, which consisted of a code of the highest morality, accompanied by an enthusiasm born of devotion to its Divine Author.

The ancients deprived deformed and sickly children of their lives, while the moderns treat those unfortunate classes with exceptional consideration and tenderness. The modern mother frequently loves her blind or ill-shapen child better than any of her handsome offspring. Does not this comparison show that the world is growing better?

CHAPTER XXX

SUICIDE

"Thou shalt not kill!" Whether this command, written on a table of stone by the finger of God, divinely interdicts the taking of one's own life, has been discussed from time immemorial. Among Christians the decision has almost uniformly been in the affirmative, and the Jews have universally adopted the same interpretation. Shakespeare sets forth the popular opinion of his time in the words of the king, Lord Hamlet's uncle, who suggests that he might commit suicide, "had not the Almighty set his canon 'gainst self-slaughter." Although not murder, suicide is a form of homicide, and seems properly to have a place in a volume treating of the taking of human life.

The enlightened sentiment of civilized mankind is strongly opposed to suicide, and only half-civilized, superstitious and idolatrous peoples, or those who scoff at all religion, at present attempt to defend the practice. In view of this fact, it is somewhat remarkable that of all the various original religious creeds of the world, only one, distinctly and in terms, condemned the taking of one's own life. Mohammed absolutely forbade suicide in the Koran, and his followers have always religiously followed the command, the offense being exceedingly rare among them.

The first instance of suicide mentioned in the Bible, and perhaps the earliest that has come down to us, is that of Samson. In his case revenge was clearly the leading motive that induced him to give up his own life. At the time when he killed so many of the Philistines and ended his own life, he was blind and a slave, and a continuance of life could have presented few charms to the one-time physical monarch of

mankind; nevertheless, revenge was clearly the leading motive. This is evident from the prayer he uttered immediately before the consummation of the rash and awfully fatal act: "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes."

Such a prayer, asking for divine strength to commit murder and suicide, would be blasphemous to us, but we must not forget that God causes the wrath of man to praise Him, and that His ways are past finding out. Wicked and desperate as it was, the act of Samson was utilized to punish the Philistines and to advance the plans of the Almighty.

To show that the Mosaic Law was probably understood as interdicting suicide, mention may be made of the circumstance that but four instances, in addition to that of Samson, are mentioned in the Bible. The second and third of these are those of Saul and his armor-bearer, which are thus recorded in the Scriptures:

"And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then Saul said unto his armor-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armor-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid; therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword and died with him."

The fourth Biblical suicide is that of Ahithophel, and is of much the same order as that of Saul. Ahithophel, in company with Absalom, the son of David, had fomented rebellion against the established government. The plot having failed, the designing and wicked man took his own life to escape the legitimate consequences of his own wrong-doing. It is recorded that he hanged himself, thus proving the prototype of a long list of suicides who have imitated his method in "shuffling off this mortal coil."

The fifth and last suicide mentioned in the Scriptures is that of Judas Iscariot. The circumstances attending his case are too well known to require detailing. Having committed a sin, in some aspects unrivaled in the annals of crime, which

has made his name a synonym for treachery, he was seized with such a deep remorse that, having first contemptuously thrown down the price of his infamy before his bribers, he went out, and, imitating Ahithophel, hanged himself. Attention should be called to the circumstance that the first chapter of Acts seems to indicate that Judas did not commit suicide, but died an accidental death, and that all the early traditions dispose of him in the same way.

An additional instance is sometimes quoted, in that of Abimelech, but his case is clearly not one of true suicide. While storming a walled town he was severely wounded on the head by a stone, cast from the hand of a woman, upon the wall. Feeling that his end was fast approaching, he directed his armor-bearer to kill him with his sword that it might not be said that a woman slew him. A Hebrew historian, in relating this event, says that his death was a divine judgment for having wickedly slain his seventy brethren.

Although the Jews, even down to the present day, have been generally opposed to suicide and have seldom died by their own hands, instances of wholesale self-slaughter have not been wanting among them. The leading case is that of Eleazer, who, together with about a thousand others, took refuge in Massada, after the capture of Jerusalem, and Josephus, one of the most exact historians that ever lived, has furnished us with a detailed account of this most remarkable slaughter. Massada, which was quite a noted stronghold, was besieged by the Romans under Siloa. When it became certain that they were sure to fall into the hands of their enemies, the Jews decided to die by their own hands rather than surrender to a foe, from whom they had no reason to expect mercy. In words that fail to suggest anything of disapproval, Josephus thus describes how they reached this desperate conclusion.

"The wall, however, being consumed to the ground, and no hope or possibility left of safety or relief, the only brave thing they had before them was to consider how they might deliver their wives and children from the ignominious outrages they might expect from the Romans, whenever they

became the masters of the place. Eleazar concluded, upon the balancing of this question, that a glorious death was infinitely to be preferred to a life of infamy, and that the most generous resolution they could take in the world would be not to outlive their liberties."

It appears that Eleazar, having reached this determination, called his people together and proceeded to eloquently argue the importance of adopting it. When he concluded many converts had been made, but a large number remained unconvinced, and a second harangue became necessary. In an impassioned address Eleazar again advocated the cause of suicide; he depicted the dreadful scenes that would follow a capture, and by his impassioned words so wrought up his followers that they all rendered a hearty assent. In describing the scene that ensued, Josephus says:

"Such was the passion these people had for the destruction of themselves and their families that not one man of them shrank when they came to execution. They took their last leave of their wives and children in their arms with a kiss and a stab. This was a miserable necessity, but they were driven upon it by a miserable choice; for the destroying of their wives and children—as it appeared to them—was the least evil they had before them."

After this slaughter they gathered together their portable property and burnt it, and then, "choosing ten men by lot of their number to do execution upon all the rest, they ranged themselves as near as they could to the dead bodies of their friends, gave them a parting embrace, and cheerfully presented their throats to those who were to do the inhuman office. So soon as the ten had, with a mighty resolution, discharged their part, they cast lots among themselves which of the remaining ten should dispatch the other nine, with a condition that the surviving tenth man should kill himself upon the bodies of the rest, such confidence had these people in one another. The nine died with the same constancy as the rest. The last man overlooked the bodies, and finding that they were all stark dead, set fire to the palace, and so cast himself upon his sword among his friends. The number of the slain

was nine hundred and sixty, reckoning women and children into the account."

No people who ever lived were better accustomed to scenes of dreadful slaughter than were the Romans at this time, yet even they were horrified at the fearful carnage. Of all the stronghold, only seven escaped death. These consisted of two women and five children who had taken refuge in an aqueduct to save their lives.

These "told the Romans the whole story, which was so incredible, however, that they could not believe it. But betaking themselves to the quenching of the fire, and following their way to the palace, they found such a carnage of dead bodies that without insulting and rejoicing as enemies they brake into admiration at the generous greatness of the Jews' minds, the steadiness of their counsels, and the obstinate agreement of such a number of men in the contempt of death."

The great historian Josephus came near sharing a like fate himself. About the same time, while at the head of a Jewish army, he was besieged at Jotaphat. Finding his case hopeless, Josephus decided to surrender to the enemy, but to this order his troops refused to agree, urging the nobler course of self-destruction. Replying, the commander set forth the sin of suicide, but his eloquent address failed to be convincing. The soldiers cast lots for executioners, and proceeded to kill each other until only Josephus and one soldier remained. At this point the Jewish captain and author proceeded to argue the point again with his companion, as a result of which both surrendered themselves to the Romans. Neither in sacred or profane times do the Jews seem to have looked upon suicide as a very grievous offense, and no indignity appears to have been shown to the bodies of those who had taken their own lives.

Brahminism is among the most ancient of all the religious creeds of the world. The teachings of this sect were very favorable to the commission of suicide. With the Brahmins there was nothing of individuality in the soul. They believed that each that lived was but a part of the great universal soul to which all would ultimately return and be absorbed.

According to their theory, a certain degree of perfection must be obtained by the individual before the blissful reunion with God could be effected. They believed in the transmigration of souls, and expected to return again to what they regarded as scenes of trial and suffering, rather than enjoyment.

From such a philosophy, universally believed, a contempt for life and a desire for death was the natural sequence. To the Brahmin, life was nothing, God everything; time not to be considered, eternity of the last importance. Such men could not be expected to have any strong love of life. Doubtless they shared this in common with all that live, but their education had well-nigh stifled it, and left death as the one really desirable thing. Few of us are entirely satisfied with our earthly condition, but "the dread of something after death" holds most of us in subjection to our present environment. To the believer in this peculiar faith, death had no such terrors; indeed, he welcomed it, hoping that a re-incarnation might improve his condition, make existence more bearable, and reduce the distance that separated him from the oblivion for which he yearned. Thus suicide became a common mode of death. This was particularly true where one was afflicted with disease, or was, for any reason, tired of life. Thus, religious fanaticism and disease united to furnish most of the victims drowned in the Ganges or crushed beneath the wheels of the car of Juggernaut. At the present day, even, it is the common practice of those afflicted with an incurable disease to seek death beneath the waters of the sacred river.

It was a general belief that lepers, and those dying of any other disease, would be afflicted in the same way in their next re-incarnation. The only escape from this fate was to perish by fire. Accordingly, vast numbers of this class ended their existence by casting themselves living into flames. The Hindoo had many other methods of committing suicide, among them precipitation from great heights, starvation and burial alive. In addition to these, self-decapitation was frequently practiced. Touching this method, Ward, in his "Hindoos," says:

"There existed formerly, at a village near Nudeeya, an

instrument which was used by devotees to cut off their own heads. It was made in the shape of a half-moon, with a sharp edge, and was placed at the back of the neck, having chains fastened at the two extremities. The infatuated devotee, placing his feet in the two stirrups, gave a violent jerk, and severed his head from his body."

Buddhism, which was a revolt against Brahminism, was still more favorable to suicide. With these two great sects the conditions were almost exactly reversed. With the Brahmin, God was everything, with the Buddhist, nothing. One looked forward to being reabsorbed into the general soul, the other to becoming a god himself. The latter was anxious to pursue his journey toward a higher life, and regarded suicide as the means of accelerating it.

Even at the present time the Buddhist considers suicide as justifiable under many circumstances. In China there are some exceptions to this rule, and some suicides are regarded as dishonorable, as those which result from losses at gambling, and some others. But in general, in China and Japan, wherever Buddhism has gained a foothold—and it is now strong in both countries—a very small value is placed upon human life, and it is given up upon the most trifling occasion and often without any reasonable provocation being apparent. With the true Buddhist the love of death, or rather the eternal joys that are to follow, takes the place of the love of life, which is the ruling passion of most mortals, and he welcomes any reasonable pretext to quit a disagreeable environment.

When a Chinese or Japanese Buddhist is insulted, instead of taking the life of his enemy he commits suicide. Writing a century ago, Charlevoix, in his history of Japan, says:

"Nothing is more common than to see boats filled with fanatical worshipers lining the shore, who weight themselves with stones and plunge into the sea, or scuttle their vessels, and sink with them beneath the waves, all the while pouring forth glad hymns to their idols. A crowd of spectators standing looking on praise them to the skies, and entreat their blessing before they disappear. The votaries of Amida

immure themselves in caves having only one small breathing hole, and barely sitting room, where they quietly wait death by starvation. Others plunge into sulphur pits, invoking their gods and entreating them to graciously accept the sacrifice of their lives." The lapse of a hundred years has wrought little change in Japan and China, where suicide is a very common occurrence; drowning, starvation, hara-kiri, or disembowelment, hanging and several other modes being employed.

The calm deliberation of Japanese suicides is remarkable. Once a Japanese has made up his mind to quit this life for a better one, he passes several nights without sleep, and surrounded by those of his friends to whom he has confided his intention. Discourses on contempt of life, varied by public harangues on the one absorbing subject of his thoughts, fill up the remainder of his days. At the approach of the appointed hour, he summons his family and friends. Choosing from among them such as are willing to die with him, generally a goodly number, he partakes of a funeral banquet and expires.

Suicide was rare among the early Greeks, and did not become common until intercourse with the Romans had contaminated them in many ways. Their views of death were in marked contrast to the Asiatics, and they violently opposed self-destruction. They manifested their abhorrence of the practice by offering indignities to the body of the suicide. Under an Athenian law such a corpse could not be buried during the day. As a further emphasis of disapproval, one of the hands was cut off and buried in a separate place to show that it had played a false part to its owner. Under no circumstances could the body of a suicide receive the honorable rites of cremation.

The only exception made by the ancient Greeks to the general condemnation of suicide was those cases where an element of patriotism entered into the act, as in the instance of King Codrus and Themistocles, both of whom were looked upon as patriots. When Attica was invaded by the Heraclidæ, King Codrus disguised himself and went among the enemy and

ADOLPH LUETGERT INSTRUCTING "SMOKEHOUSE FRANK" HOW TO CRUSH THE POTASH.—PAGE 498.

picked a quarrel with some soldiers, which resulted in his death, which was the object he sought to attain. The "Oracle" had pronounced that the leader of the conquering army would surely die, and to make the necessary condition apply to his side the king gave up his life, believing, no doubt, that it would insure the triumph of his troops and the liberty of his country. Themistocles was not condemned for committing suicide, because he took his own life to avoid leading the Persians against his own people.

But this admirable view of the sacredness of human life did not continue in Greece. The rise of the so-called philosophical schools speedily introduced and disseminated far different notions, and swept away the laws and customs that had long prevailed. The Sophists taught the people that their gods were only myths, invented and used to overawe them, and advanced a radically new doctrine, viz., that reason is man's only true guide. So far, this was a decided advance over anything that had preceded it among the Greeks, but the Sophists carried the matter much farther, and declared that man had absolute freedom, not only as to his life, but as to his death as well. As this philosophy was gradually adopted the views of the people toward suicide changed, and in time it came to be looked upon as a perfectly honorable means of quitting a life that, for any reason, had become unbearable, or even distasteful.

The Cynics, who followed the Sophists, considerably enlarged upon this theory, and, as a result, suicide became an every-day occurrence. Many of the greatest of all philosophers of this remarkable school died by their own hand. Among them may be recorded Diogenes, the greatest of them all, Stelpo, Menedermus, Onesicratus, Metrocles, Demonax and Peregrinus.

The extreme views of the Buddhists were rivaled, if not surpassed, by those of the Stoics, who followed the Cynics, and from whose name we derive "stoical," perhaps our strongest word for distinguishing contempt for pain and misfortune. With them, suicide became a veritable dogma, and life was depreciated to a level as low as it ever fell during the palmy

days of Brahminism. While the Stoics taught morality and practiced the same, leading most severe and highly useful lives, they ceased to live the moment they found life disagreeable, and thus exerted a tremendous influence upon their time. In addition to Zeno, the founder of the school, Cleanthus and many others took their own lives.

The Epicureans occupied a much lower position than any of their philosophic predecessors. With them life was only valuable so far as pleasure could be derived from it, and they taught and practiced the theory that it was wise to die the moment that existence ceased to be pleasurable in the aggregate. The philosophies of Greece soon spread to Rome, where they produced results that have not yet ceased to effect mankind. The schools that were best received by the Romans were the Stoics and Epicureans, and these were made heartily welcome, and soon became widely known and decidedly fashionable. The Romans were well prepared to accept the doctrine of suicide, which was already regarded with considerable favor. The fierce fights of gladiators and the numbers of barbarian captives who took their own lives, often in the public arena, rather than slay their fellow-countrymen, had tended to greatly reduce the value of human life and give suicide a decided impetus.

With astonishing rapidity, suicide became what in the present day we might term a "fad." It was earnestly propagated by multitudes of men, some of whom take a high rank among the noblest of their kind. In this long list may be included such names as Zeno, Plato, Seneca, Cleanthus, Cicero, Epiletus, Marcus Aurelius, and the elder Pliny. Of the great men of Pagan Europe, a very large proportion terminated their own existence. Thus died Lycurgus, Charondas, Themistocles, Demosthenes, Aristarchus, Cato, Brutus, Cassius, Mark Antony, Lucian, Seneca, Nero and Otho, and a large number of others whose names will last as long as civilization continues to exist.

Seneca, the tutor of the base and cruèl Nero, and one of the wisest and best of all the ancients, was a most ardent and powerful advocate of suicide. No writer has ever pleaded

more strongly for the propriety of the practice. To show the view that almost universally prevailed in that day, a few eloquent, almost impassioned sentences, are quoted below from the works of the great philosopher:

"To death alone it is due that life is not a punishment, that, erect beneath the frowns of fortune, I can preserve my mind unshaken and master of itself. I have one to whom I can appeal. I see before me the crosses of many forms—I see the rack and the scourge, and the instruments of torture adapted to every limb and to every nerve; but I also see Death. She stands beyond my savage enemies, beyond my haughty fellow-countrymen. Slavery loses its bitterness when by a step I can pass to liberty. Against all the injuries of life I have the refuge of death. Wherever you look, there is the end of evils. You see that yawning precipice—there you may descend to liberty. You see that sea, that river, that well—liberty sits at the bottom. Do you seek the way to freedom?—you may find it in every vein of your body. If I can choose between the death of torture and one that is simple and easy, why should I not select the latter? As I choose the ship in which I sail, and the house I will inhabit, so I will choose the death by which I will leave life. In no matter more than death should we act according to our desire. Depart from life as your impulse leads you, whether it be by the sword, or the rope, or the poison creeping through the veins; go your way, and break the chains of slavery. Man should seek the approbation of others in his life; his death concerns himself alone. That is the best which pleases him most. The eternal law has decreed nothing better than this; that life should have but one entrance and many exits. Why should I endure the agonies of disease, and the cruelties of human tyranny, when I can emancipate myself from all my torments, and shake off every bond? For this reason, but for this alone, life can be esteemed no just cause of complaint—that no one is obliged to live. The lot of man is happy, because no one continues wretched but by his fault. If life pleases you, live; if not, you have a right to return whence you came."

The Roman law did little to retard or even discourage sui-

cide; indeed, but two slight restrictions were placed upon what was recognized as the universal right of all. It had long been customary for those who were accused of political offenses to take their own lives before trial, to the end that they might avoid the ignominious exposure of their bodies, and the confiscation of their goods to the State. Domitian put a stop to this practice by decreeing that the suicide of an accused person should carry with it the same condemnation and penalties as though he had been tried and convicted. Afterwards, the Emperor Hadrian declared the suicide of a Roman soldier to be equivalent to desertion. In 1802 his example was emulated by the Emperor Napoleon, who issued a similar order to check the prevalence of suicide among his soldiers.

The Emperor Otho is said to have committed suicide to avoid being a second time the cause of a civil war. Upon his death some of his soldiers, filled with grief and admiration, killed themselves before his corpse. It is said that the suicide of Otho was extolled as of equal grandeur with that of Cato. Cato lived during the Roman Republic, and attempted to bring about much-needed reforms in the commonwealth. In this he opposed the three most powerful men in Rome, Crassus, Pompey and Cæsar. In the civil wars that ensued Cato finally sided with Pompey, after whose death he carried on a losing fight. His last act was the defense of Utica. Here, when he had tidings of Cæsar's victory over Scipio at Thapsus (April 6, 46 B. C.), Cato, finding that his troops were wholly intimidated, advised the Roman senators and knights to escape from Utica, and make terms with the victor, but prohibited all intercessions in his own favor. He resolved to die rather than surrender, and, after spending the night in reading Plato's Phædo, which argued strongly for the immortality of the soul, committed suicide by stabbing himself in the breast.

Joseph Addison, in his drama of Cato, represents the famous soldier and statesman, a sword and the scroll of Plato before him, soliloquizing as follows over his contemplated suicide:

"It must be so; Plato, thou reasonest well!
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, the inward horror,
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heaven itself, that points out a hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a Power above us
(And that there is, all Nature cries aloud
Through all her works), he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy.
But when? or where? This world was made for Cæsar.
I'm weary of conjectures,—this must end them.
[Laying his hand on his sword]
Thus am I doubly armed; my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This in a moment brings me to an end.
But *this* informs me I shall never die.
The soul secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger—and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amid the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds!"

A story that illustrates the Roman tendency to suicide and likewise shows the seemingly slight provocation upon which men will sacrifice their lives, has come down to us from the days of ancient Rome. Tarquin, known as "The Proud," having finished a brilliant campaign, brought his victorious army back to the "Eternal City." Having no enterprise in hand upon which he could employ his soldiers, he decided to set them to work as laborers in the building of drains and sewers and other improvements of the city. The soldiers rebelled at these irksome and ignoble tasks, and, having no

other escape, resorted to suicide. This now developed into a regular mania, and large numbers daily took their own lives; in fact, the destruction of the entire army began to be seriously threatened, and severe methods were decided upon by Tarquin. Accordingly, he issued an edict to the effect that the bodies of all soldiers who committed suicide should be crucified and exposed upon the streets in full view of the curious populace. This order had the desired effect, the Roman soldier caring more for what he deemed his honor than he did for his life, and the practice disappeared. It may be remarked, in passing, that efforts to employ trained soldiers in menial tasks have signally failed in all ages of the world.

The self-destruction of Petronius Arbiter, the favorite of the Emperor Nero, was performed in an altogether unprecedented manner. Petronius was charged with conspiracy against the life of the emperor, and, as the charge was credited, he determined to withdraw himself from Nero's punishment by a voluntary death. He ordered his veins to be opened, and apparently wished to show that he desired to die in the same careless and unconcerned manner as he had lived. He passed his time in discoursing with his friends upon trifles, and listened with the greatest avidity to love verses, amusing stories or laughable epigrams. Sometimes he manumitted his slaves or punished them with stripes. In this careless and ludicrous manner he spent his last moments, until nature was exhausted. Before he expired he wrote an epistle to the emperor, in which he described with a masterly hand his nocturnal extravagances, and the daily impurity of his actions. This letter was carefully sealed, and after he had caused it to be conveyed privately to the emperor, Petronius broke his signet, that it might not after his death become a snare to the innocent. This Petronius is the leading character in the popular novel, "Quo Vadis."

Zeno, the founder of the sect of stoical philosophers, who has already been referred to, acted up to the principles which he inculcated in his disciples. It is recorded that his suicide took place in the following manner: As he was going out of his school one day, at the age of ninety-eight, he fell down

and put a finger out of joint, whereupon he exclaimed, referring to the gods: "So you want me, do you?" and went home and hanged himself. Zeno's successor, Cleanthus, ended his days by suicide in a remarkable manner. Having used abstinence for two days by the advice of his physician, for the cure of a trifling indisposition under which he was laboring, he had permission to return to his former diet; but he refused, saying, that as he had advanced so far on his journey towards death, he would not retreat. He accordingly starved himself to death.

Among the ancient Greeks the utterances of the Oracles are said to have been the cause of many suicides. As is well known, the ancient Grecians regarded the prophesies and counsels uttered by the priests who served at these shrines as absolutely infallible. One of the most famous was the Oracle of the god Apollo at Delphi, and this is said to have been especially prolific in promoting self-destruction. Cadmus, King of Athens, killed himself because he was advised by the Oracle that his death would promote the welfare of the State. The same motive is said to have prompted the suicide of Lycurgus, the celebrated law-giver of Sparta.

On the island of Leucas or Leucadia, situated in the Ionian Sea, near the coast of Epirus, which in modern times is known as St. Maura, was a famous promontory called Leucate, from which desponding and disappointed lovers were wont to cast themselves into the sea. This was the spot, according to the ancient legends, where Sappho destroyed herself in order to be free from the violent passion which she entertained for Pharon. Some Greek writers have said that her suicide originated the custom and that her example was frequently followed by those who suffered from unrequited love.

The inhabitants of Central Asia have never been greatly addicted to suicide, the Tartars particularly, having always been singularly free from the practice. In Persia it has been of rare occurrence from the earliest times. This is probably due to the nature of the religion of the country, which, without positively prohibiting self-destruction, tended to materially discourage it. Among all these peoples, however, suicide

was permissible under certain circumstances, and was not regarded as especially dishonorable.

From the earliest recorded times, suicide was practiced in ancient Egypt, where it was regarded as an entirely honorable mode of death. Large numbers of the Egyptians died by their own hands, and about the beginning of the Christian era the practice seems to have arrived at its maximum growth. Egypt had long been deteriorating, and had sunk to a low level at that time. Rameses the Great, one of the most prominent figures of antiquity, who was a victorious warrior while yet a mere boy, very deliberately ended his own life, for the reason that he had become blind.

Suicide was not more common or honorable among the Greeks and Romans of Southern Europe than with the Norsemen, Goths, and other barbaric peoples of the northern and western portions of the continent. These warriors, who conquered almost the whole of Western Europe, including Britain and Ireland, and even marched victoriously through the streets of the "Eternal City," above all the ills of life, feared a peaceful death from the effects of old age, and comparatively few of them ever died in that way. This custom was chargeable to their religious, or, more properly, superstitious faith. According to their belief there was but one way to gain admission to the presence of their god, Odin, within the sacred precincts of the Hall of Valhalla. The significance of this term clearly indicates the method of entering it. The "Hall of Valhalla" means, literally, "the hall of those dead of violence." Death met in battle was the most honorable of all, but those who took their own lives in a violent manner were not excluded, as, however, were all who died a natural death. In consequence of this belief, which was fixed and universal, comparatively few succumbed to death in the ordinary course of nature. This superstition is largely responsible for the almost unparalleled bravery of these people, most of whom, particularly when advanced in life or afflicted with a disease that might soon prove fatal, actually courted death. When such, by what they regarded as a most unfortunate chance, escaped the death they coveted,

suicide was the only remaining route by which to gain bliss beyond the grave, and they eagerly resorted to it.

In what marked contrast to this fear of dying of old age is the Christian notion! With the decay of the baser passions and impulses that too frequently sway youth and manhood, the loftier attributes of the soul are thrown strongly into the foreground, and the declining years of a truly good man become the highest compliment that can be paid to poor human nature, besides furnishing an example of almost priceless value to youth. Of all creatures such a person should be the last to contemplate suicide. Robert Blair, in his sombre but beautiful poem, "The Grave," thus describes the last days of a truly good and pious old man:

"Thrice welcome death!
That, after many a painful, bleeding step,
Conducts us to our home, and lands us safe
On the long wish'd for shore. Prodigious change!
Our bane turn'd to a blessing! Death, disarm'd,
Loses his feilness quite; all thanks to Him
Who scourged the venom out. Sure the last end
Of the good man is peace! How calm his exit!
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him! in the evening tide of life,
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green;
By unperceived degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting!
High in his faith and hopes, look how he reaches
After the prize in view! and like a bird
That's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away!
Whilst the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
To let the new glories in, the first fair fruits
Of the fast coming harvest. Then, oh! then
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,
Shrunk to a thing of naught! Oh, how he longs
To have his passport signed, and be dismiss'd!
'Tis done—and now he's happy! The glad soul
Has not a wish uncrown'd."

Among the many legends of the ancient Vikings is one to the effect that when any one of these pirate princes felt his end approaching, he demanded to be carried upon the ship

which he had commanded, that the vessel be rowed out into the sea, and then set on fire, meeting death with unruffled serenity, believing that upon this sea of fire his soul was destined to float to the Hall of Valhalla. It is not surprising that a warrior, vanquished and cast to earth, patiently awaited the coming of the foe whose sword he knew would dispatch him. A favorite mode of suicide among the Scandinavians of this early period was the leaping from a rock into the surging, boiling caldron of waters below. This was ordinarily considered a method of "departure to Odin." Some historians claim that this custom was so common that many of the rocks of Sweden have become famous as points from which self-destruction was perpetrated. In fact, there are certain crags in the Scandinavian Peninsula which are now pointed out as the scenes of self-destruction. They are usually called Attestupor (stem of the rock). One of these rests upon a slope of a lake in the interior province. More frequently, however, there are pointed out to the traveler those which abut upon the sea, from which, according to ancient superstition, the entrance to the Hall of Odin was more easy. Travelers in Sweden and Norway are always greatly interested in the public superstition attaching to these stones. A quaint Swedish writer, referring to the practice of self-destruction in early days, says that "it is useless to give ourselves up to groans and complaints, or to put our relatives to needless expense, since we can easily follow the example of our fathers, who have gone by the way of the rock."

All sorts of traditions cluster around these spots which are pointed out to travelers by the Swedish peasants. For instance, two rocks are found in West Forhland, to which had been given the name Valhal, because at one time the populace of Sweden supposed that they stood directly above the entrance of Odin's Hall. Another of these rocks is known to the common people as Stafva Hill, which is said to have been, at one time, the scene of numerous suicides by the followers and devotees of Odin.

Those who were too feeble with age or from sickness to enter a battle were often carried, at their most urgent request,

upon battle-fields and left there, in the hope that a chance bolt or blow might end their lives. In this peculiar belief the men of the North bore a resemblance to the Mohammedans, who, later on, believed that death on the field of battle was the surest method of attaining a happy immortality.

With the spread of Christianity, the worship of Odin, with all the horrible beliefs which that worship implied, came to an end. The Scandinavian Peninsula is to-day Christian from one end to the other, yet remnants of the old belief may still be distinguished in the custom, which yet prevails in certain parts of Sweden, of burying a warrior attired in his full accoutrements.

To a certain extent the ancient Celts took a similar view of death, and preferred perishing upon the battle-field to any other mode of departing this life. The Celts firmly believed in the reality of a future life, which largely accounts for the readiness with which they embraced the Christian faith. While by no means so frequent as with the Norsemen, suicide was not uncommon among them, particularly in old age.

CHAPTER XXXI

SUICIDE—CONTINUED

Had the Christian religion accomplished no other end than the elevation in the popular mind of the value and the sanctity of human life, it would still justly be accounted the greatest boon ever allotted to humanity. As appears from the preceding chapter, the world at the time the Redeemer was born was plunged in degradation, and human life was held at a low price. To people who contemplate suicide as an honorable means of escaping the trials and perplexities of life, truly great and good actions are almost impossible of accomplishment. The influence of Christianity in checking suicide, which had become a veritable mania in almost every civilized country, was two-fold. It taught the universal brotherhood of man and presented God in the guise of a kind Father, to whom the entire human family owed obedience and love. From this general proposition followed the corollary, that man must not offend his Maker by going unsummoned into His presence, and, likewise, that he owes duties to his fellows that he cannot, in good conscience, avoid by giving up his life. Its second effect in checking self-murder consisted in the doctrine that all are not equally happy after death, and that an eternity of bliss can only be attained by right living and right dying. Many of the religious and philosophical systems of the ancients contained admirable precepts and theories, but they failed to give life the all-important and sacred place to which it was elevated by the religion of Christ.

It has often been pointed out that the founder of Christianity never denounced suicide. The same may be said of many other crimes which he never mentioned, and the omission cannot be twisted into any form of approval or

excuse. The whole tenor of his teachings is opposed to anything so monstrous. In his doctrine, submission to the will of God has the most prominent place. Add to this the circumstance that he healed the sick, and even recalled to life some who had departed from this world, and his position cannot for a moment be doubted.

The early Fathers of the Church wrote and preached against suicide, yet it was not until several centuries had elapsed that the Church did anything more than strongly remonstrate against the practice. Notwithstanding this, suicide was rare among the early Christians, as compared with the pagan peoples with whom they came in contact. With the advent of persecution, however, it became much more common. Where opposition is not sufficiently strong to crush a movement it usually tends to rapidly develop it. To suffer torture and even death by reason of their faith, so far from conquering those zealous disciples of our Lord, actually encouraged them and developed such an unbounded enthusiasm, such a yearning for the joys of the newly revealed heaven, that many, so far from shrinking back and trying to avoid their fate, literally met death half-way, while some were raised to such a fervor as to take their own lives.

The suicidal tendency of the early Christians is one of the darkest clouds upon the beginnings of the Church, and yet it cannot, in reason, be very strongly condemned. The faith was new, and enthusiasm at a white heat. The days of the apostles, and even Christ himself, lay in the recent past. The new religion was such a radical departure from any that had preceded it that its full force and almost infinite meaning was hardly appreciated by those who received it with open arms. What wonder that transient life seemed valueless to their eyes as compared with the eternal bliss of heaven? For a long time the Christian had no need to resort to suicide, persecution furnishing ample opportunity for all who wished to quit this life, and forcing thousands to do so who were far from being weary of existence. After a time, however, persecution began to wane, and comparatively few Christians were put to death by the authorities. Then the mania for death

manifested itself in full force, and the means of quitting a life that had become vanity, and gaining the skies, were eagerly sought after. The pagans were often deliberately incited to acts of violence by the actions of the Christians who sought death. Many instances are given by reliable historians where, when brought before the magistrates for judgment, the accused begged that sentence of death might be imposed upon them. Edward Gibbon, one of the most accurate and painstaking of modern historians, in his "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," has this to say on the subject:

"Stories are related of the courage of martyrs who actually performed what Ignatius had intended; who exasperated the fury of the lions, pressed the executioner to hasten his office, cheerfully leaped into the fires which were kindled to consume them, and discovered a sensation of joy and pleasure in the midst of the most exquisite tortures. Several examples have been preserved of a zeal impatient of those restraints which the emperors had provided for the security of the Church. The Christians sometimes supplied by their voluntary declarations the want of an accuser, rudely disturbed the public service of paganism, and rushing in crowds around the tribunals, called upon them to pronounce and to inflict the sentence of the law."

It is recorded that, upon one such occasion, the proconsul, Antonius Pius, refused to grant the prayers of those who were clamoring for death, saying: "Unhappy men, unhappy men! if you are thus weary of your lives, is it so difficult for you to find ropes and precipices?"

It must not be understood that this course was approved by all Christians; as a matter of fact, it was strongly opposed by the great majority of those whom enthusiasm had not deprived of reason. The early Church was broken up into sects, some of which were denounced as heretical and whose actions cannot be charged against the great body of Christians. Among these were the Donatists, who sprang into existence early in the fourth century. The first Council of Arles (August 1, A. D. 314) decided against Donatus, a Numidian bishop, who then

seceded from the Catholic Church and established the sect that bore his name. By the beginning of the fifth century, the Donatists had become very powerful, well-nigh rivaling the Catholics in point of numbers. This sect, while advocating many really admirable doctrines, was absolutely fanatical on the subject of suicide as a means of attaining speedy transition to heaven. Touching this sect, Gibbon has this to say:

"Many of these fanatics were possessed with a horror of life, and the desire of martyrdom; and they deemed it of little moment by what means or by what hands they perished, if their conduct was sanctified by the intention of devoting themselves to the glory of the true faith and the hope of eternal happiness. Sometimes they rudely disturbed the festivals and profaned the temples of paganism, with the design of exciting the most zealous of the idolators to revenge the insulted honor of their gods. They sometimes forced their way into the courts of justice and compelled the affrighted judge to give orders for their immediate execution. They frequently stopped travelers on the public highways, and obliged them to inflict the stroke of martyrdom by the promise of a reward if they consented, and by the threat of instant death if they refused to grant so very singular a favor. When they were disappointed of every other resource, they announced the day on which, in the presence of their friends and brethren, they should cast themselves headlong from some lofty rock; and many precipices were shown which had acquired fame by the number of religious suicides."

The third Council of Arles, A. D. 452, condemned suicide under any and all circumstances, and from this date what may be termed voluntary Christian martyrdom began to decline, though it continued among the Donatists and some other sects for a full century, and the denunciation was repeated by the Church, over and over again, before the desired end was fully accomplished. But although smothered, the desire for martyrdom was not effectually quenched, and blazed up on more than one occasion, centuries after. Several instances of this kind occurred during the Crusades, and even at later periods. On this point Dr. J. J. O'Dea, in his admirable

work, "Suicide; Its Philosophy, Causes and Prevention," has this to say:

"At the battle of Hittin, where the Latin Empire of the East was broken forever, those Knights Templars who refused to adopt the Moslem faith were ruthlessly slain by command of Saladin; and many Christian soldiers who thirsted for the glory of martyrdom, but were not of that order, put on the mantles of the slain Templars, and went gladly to their deaths."

Many women, in all ages of the world, have resorted to suicide to escape defilement. This was true of the Greeks and Romans, and many historical instances might be cited. Somewhat different was the case of Lucretia, the beautiful and virtuous Roman matron, whom Shakespeare made the subject of a powerful poem. After having been overpowered and brutally treated by Tarquin Sextus, she committed suicide from very shame.

The early Christian women frequently resorted to suicide from this cause, and a long list of their names has come down to us. This course was defended by many of the Fathers of the Church, among them such eminent religious authorities as St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and St. Chrysostom. On the other hand, the greatest, perhaps, of them all, St. Augustine, held, and taught in no uncertain way, that suicide for the preservation of chastity was unwarrantable and absolutely sinful. But, while the Church strongly combated suicide, as has been already shown, it went so far as to canonize as a saint Pelagia, who, to escape her would-be ravishers, threw herself from a housetop and met instant death. On this subject, John Donne, the English poet and theologian, says:

"The memory of Pelagia as a virgin and a martyr is celebrated the 9th of June. . . . The Church celebrates the act as though it were glad to take any occasion of approving such a courage in such a cause, which was the preservation of chastity."

When Rome fell before the victorious Northern hordes of the Goths, under the leadership of Alaric, in 410, great numbers of Christian women took their own lives to escape the hands of the fierce barbarians.

In the early centuries of the Christian era suicide was quite common among those who had withdrawn from the world and resided in monasteries. A considerable part of these are to be charged to melancholy resulting from seclusion from friends and the pleasures of life, depression of spirits being, as is well understood, one of the most fruitful causes of suicide. In many instances it was caused by long contemplation of the lives of the early martyrs and the glories of the world to come, which were painted in high colors in the literature of the early Church. Occasionally, even at the present day, truly devout and good people take their own lives under intense religious excitement. Modern science, however, classes such people as insane, which, no doubt, was the real condition of a large proportion of those who took their own lives in ancient times.

An extraordinary instance of suicide as the result of a mind unbalanced through religious fanaticism occurred in Venice, in the person of a shoemaker named Matthew Loval. Laboring under a delusion that he was fulfilling the commands of the Almighty, he determined to die by crucifixion. For three days he pondered over the matter, and at the expiration of this period, having crowned himself with thorns and stripped himself of his clothing, he bound a handkerchief around his waist and climbed upon a cross which he had himself constructed, placing each foot upon a ledge made for that purpose. He transfixed his feet with five nails five inches in length, which he himself firmly hammered into the wood. He then impaled both hands upon metal points, which he had attached to the cross for that purpose. Before attaching his left hand, however, he inflicted a deep wound in his left side, it evidently being his intention to emulate the death of Christ as completely as he was able. Having made all these preparations, he contrived, by means of ropes which he had fixed for the purpose, to drag his cross out of the window, where he remained suspended until the following day. When discovered his right hand had become detached from the cross, but otherwise he was securely fastened to it. He was taken down and carried to the hospital. Strange to say, he recovered, but was at once

sent to an insane asylum. Here he soon afterwards died, the primary cause of his death being pulmonary consumption, which was, in the opinion of the physicians, aggravated by his constant endeavors to fast.

Efforts have been made in every nation in Christendom to check the tendency to suicide by means of legislative enactment. During the reign of Louis IX. of France it was enacted that the property of a suicide should be confiscated to the use of the State, and later, in the seventeenth century, it was decreed that the body of a self-murderer should be ignominiously dragged at the cart's tail. This remained upon the statute book until 1789, when it was repealed by the national assembly, that body regarding such a regulation as an interference with the right of individual action.

Mankind is much given to imitation, and this quality, or trait, has been responsible for no end of suicides, and also has largely shaped the means by which they were committed. One of the most remarkable instances of this kind occurred among the women of Miletus, an ancient and most flourishing city of Ionia, in Asia Minor. Large numbers of the Milesian women committed suicide for the one reason that their husbands and lovers were detained by the wars much longer than they had anticipated. This would seem no reasonable cause for suicide, and in the present day would lead to no such results. Indeed, it can be explained upon no other hypothesis than that of an inability to resist the examples that were so universally presented. A constant and truly devoted woman would glory in the services her lover or husband was rendering her country, and await his return with fidelity, if not with patience; while one of a frivolous or trifling character would seek a new one. This outbreak, which proved of a most serious character, was finally terminated by an edict that the bodies of all suicides should be carried naked through the streets. In this instance the inherent feeling of modesty proved stronger than the passion of mourning love.

A similar epidemic broke out in Lyons, France, during the seventeenth century. In this instance no cause whatever could be found for the mania which swept over the city, carry-

ing to untimely and dishonorable graves many of the fairest and wealthiest of its women. The governor of Lyons broke up the practice, much as it had been done in Miletus, by declaring that the bodies of those who took their own lives should be exposed naked in the market-place. The women of these cities must have been in a decidedly abnormal condition. The sudden cessation of the practice upon the order exposing their bodies being made, is explained by Dr. S. A. K. Strahan, in his recent work entitled "Suicide and Insanity," on the theory that those most predisposed to yield to the mania had been among the first to terminate their existence, and that the remainder were more easily influenced by a sense of shame.

Even representations on the stage have been known to lead to large numbers of suicides. Legoyt says that after M. de Vigny's drama "Chatterton" was performed in Paris, many persons, chiefly of a highly sentimental organization, killed themselves in imitation of the death of the hero. The name of this highly-gifted but most unfortunate young suicide is entitled to more than a passing notice. He was born at Bristol, England, in 1752. On the opening of the new bridge at Bristol in 1768, when Thomas Chatterton was but sixteen years of age, he sent to a newspaper an account, written in antique style, both as to phraseology and spelling, of the opening of the old bridge, several centuries before, which he claimed to have taken from an ancient manuscript. For a time he turned out poems, and historical and biographical sketches, which he claimed to have taken from ancient documents that had curiously come into his possession. He succeeded in deceiving some of the foremost literary men of England, among them Horace Walpole. Chatterton produced an enormous amount of literary matter which was highly praised, but which brought him next to no money at all. Finally, in poverty and desperation, he committed suicide in 1770, before he had attained the age of eighteen years. Chatterton was the greatest prodigy in the whole world of literature. Had some friend come to his assistance, and prolonged his life, he would doubtless have proved himself the greatest author that ever lived upon earth. He was never mentally a child, his mind having been developed from

his very cradle. That his abnormal mind was somewhat unbalanced may be concluded from his peculiar methods and his suicidal death.

While the Jews, in their normal condition, have usually been singularly exempt from the practice of self-destruction, instances are not wanting where they have been stricken with suicidal mania and have taken their own lives in large numbers. During the tenth and fourteenth centuries, large numbers of Jews took their own lives to escape cruel persecution, and how many have preferred death to slavery will never be known. On one occasion, at York, England, five hundred committed suicide to escape the persecution to which they were being subjected. During the fourteenth century vast numbers of them took their own lives in several Rheinish towns, during the awful prevalence of the "Black Death."

Imitation extends often to the means employed, and the place selected for the commission of the last rash act.

A monument in London, erected in commemoration of the great fire of 1666, has been the scene of many acts of self-destruction. At the time of its construction it was considered the finest isolated column in the world. As it is over two hundred feet in height, and as the public were permitted to ascend it upon the payment of a trivial fee, it was frequently selected as a vantage-point from which those contemplating self-murder might leap with an assurance of success. Indeed, the frequency of such acts led to the erection of a stout iron framework around the outer gallery at the top of the monument, although the high staircase is still a place well adapted for the commission of suicide. St. Paul's Cathedral in London has also been a site selected by self-murderers for the accomplishment of their plans, as have also been the towers of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. Since the completion of the great Brooklyn bridge, a large number of people have ended their lives by leaping from its lofty height into the river below, and a high bridge in Lincoln Park, Chicago, has attained a like uncanny reputation.

The following instances of suicide are at once interesting and instructive, as showing the small provocation required to

cause some people to take their own lives, and the unique methods adopted by others. An English servant girl, who had always borne a good character, was once accused of theft. Thereupon she determined to kill herself. Repairing to the wash-room, she plunged her head in a pail of water, and was found dead in this position. Two French soldiers, having resolved to leave the world, went to St. Denis, where they ordered an elaborate dinner. They spent the day, which happened to be Christmas, in a festive manner, and then shot themselves, leaving a number of empty bottles, the last will and testament of each, some letters, a few coins for the waiter, and the amount of their bill upon the table at which they had been dining. In the year 1834, an Italian nobleman cast himself into the crater of Mt. Vesuvius; a German peasant heard of his death, and, anxious to emulate his example, finding himself without the means to travel so far as Vesuvius, threw himself into a smelting furnace. A curious method of suicide was that adopted by a Frenchman, whose name has not come down to us; he attached his body to an enormous rocket, and died in a blaze of glory in mid-air. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader of the case of Vatel, a celebrated cook, who prided himself upon his skill as a chef. He could not endure the mortification of having sent up dinner without fish. The fish not having arrived, he found himself reduced to a most lamentable extremity, and at once, perhaps because he considered his reputation to have been indelibly stained, plunged a sword through his heart.

"Suicide Clubs" are by no means uncommon, a number having been discovered and "written up" in the newspapers during recent years. Such a thing seems to involve an absurdity and makes a strong demand upon human credulity to believe it true; yet there is no doubt as to the reality of such organizations. Dr. Schlegel, a German writer, is authority for the statement that some years ago there existed in Paris a society calling themselves "Friends of Suicide," and had a membership of twelve. Each member was required to prove that he was a man of honor, and that he had suffered some injustice at the hands of another, before he was eligible

for admission to the select band. The ingratitude of a friend, the faithlessness of a mistress, the infidelity of a wife; these, and multitudes of other troubles, were regarded as of sufficient gravity to be so ranked. Each year a lot was cast to decide which of the members should commit suicide in the presence of his colleagues. So intense was the disgust and indignation of Dr. Schlegel at the toleration of such practices in Paris, that he called the French metropolis "a suffocating, boiling caldron which, like the stew of Macbeth's witches, simmered with a modicum of virtue, all kinds of passions, vices and crimes."

"Two clubs of this kind have come to light within the past year," said Strahan, writing in 1893. "In the early months of 1892 five cadets of the Roumanian Military School at Crajova, committed suicide by shooting themselves with revolvers, and an official inquiry was held with a view of discovering the cause of such fatality. It was then found that there existed a 'suicide club' of nineteen members; that the five cadets who killed themselves had been members of the club, and had shot themselves in accordance with the rules of their society. It appeared that the members were bound by a fearful oath to obey the rules of the society, one of which was that every member, on his name being drawn by lot, must immediately kill himself. No reason for the existence of this extraordinary society was discovered; nor could any of the members give any explanation, reasonable or otherwise, why he joined in such a conspiracy.

"In October, 1892, in New York, J. B. Morehead, a wealthy theatrical manager, shot himself, leaving a letter addressed to the coroner, which ran thus: 'Dear Sir: I have committed suicide as per club. Please give verdict to such effect and oblige ——' At the inquest evidence was given that the deceased belonged to a club, each member of which on joining had to fix a date for his own death, and was bound by oath to kill himself when that date came. The witness who gave this evidence upon oath at the inquiry, said he himself was a member of the club, but declined to give the date he had appointed for his own death."

From the earliest times it has been almost universally held

that "self-preservation is the first law of nature," and beyond a doubt the saying is founded upon substantial truth. "Skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life," is the Scriptural form of expressing the same idea. The maintenance of human life upon the earth depends upon this deep-seated abhorrence of death, and also upon the existence of the procreative instinct. Without the latter the race would fail for lack of new recruits, while the absence of the former would so multiply suicide as to shortly depopulate the world.

That the love of life is a divinely implanted instinct, or active principle of the human mind, is proven by its universality. All animal life is similarly endowed, and all creatures struggle for a continuance of existence. More than that, the same instinct, or rather a modified form of it, seems to pervade vegetable life. A tree or plant that under a normal condition does not send its roots far into the earth, in times of drouth will penetrate to unusual depths in search of needed moisture. A score of illustrations might be given, but one will suffice.

In the savage man this instinct is particularly strong, and among the lowest and rudest peoples of the world suicide has always been very unusual, nothing, as a rule, driving them to it, except starvation. The reason for this is plain. Possessed only of those desires and passions that can be easily gratified, the savage is not subject to those disappointments that, in the civilized man, produce melancholy, discouragement and disgust of life. Again, his simple food and almost total lack of "civilized dissipation" peculiarly exempt him from both physical and mental disease. In brief, he occupies a plane so near that of the lower animals that he is governed by instincts, or intuitions, similar to theirs, and naturally follows much the same course; living only in and for the pleasures of the present, and taking little care of the future.

By an arrangement of nature, which goes far towards demonstrating the goodness as well as the wisdom of God, the love of life, strong in youth and manhood, commences to decline as the body begins to lose its vitality and activity. Were it otherwise, the last days of a good man, instead of

being peaceful and full of hope and expectation for the life to come, as beautifully expressed by Blair, in the passage quoted in the preceding chapter, would be tormented with regrets, anxieties and terrors. Although the love of life is at a low ebb after a man has passed his seventy-fifth birthday, suicides among men of that advanced age are much less frequent than with those who are from ten to twenty years younger. This is explained on the theory that the greater portion of those naturally disposed to suicide have yielded to the impulse earlier in life; have become demented and are taken care of on that account, or have reached, after life's tempestuous voyage, a calm and open sea of contentment and hope.

In the very young the desire to live is not particularly strong, but increases with age. This may be charged to a lack of experience and appreciation of what life really means. Suicide among children is not uncommon. Instances are recorded where the subject was less than five years old, but these were very rare; from five to ten they are more frequent, and seem to be increasing during recent years. From fifteen to twenty the percentage is quite large, many youths taking their own lives from seemingly trivial causes; as a reprimand, a whipping, a failure to pass an examination, and the like.

Notwithstanding the deep-seated love of life, there is such a thing as a suicidal impulse, which may originate from the same principle in the human mind that underlies the homicidal impulse, that has been discussed elsewhere in the present volume. This impulse is usually divided into two varieties, or forms: the instantaneous suicidal impulse, where one is seized with a sudden and frequently uncontrollable desire to take his own life, and the gradually developing impulse to do the same thing, which is slight at first and increases with time.

The first variety is comparatively common, large numbers annually falling victims to its increasing demands. As a rule, it comes upon one like a flash, and impels him to terminate his existence, often mechanically, without the subject fully realizing what he is doing. Usually the insane possession passes away in a short time. Strahan instances the case of Sir Samuel Romilly, who so injured himself, while laboring under the

effect of this dark impulse, that he died in a few minutes. When discovered, he was entirely rational, and was making desperate efforts to save his life by staying the flow of blood. Many similar instances are recorded. The finding of coroners' juries in such cases is almost invariably "Suicide during temporary insanity," and such findings are doubtless generally correct, although the same verdict is charitably returned in no end of instances where there is not the slightest evidence of insanity. In cases of this kind, where the ancestry of the subject can be traced, insanity is usually found in his family; indeed, it often develops that several of its members have taken their own lives under similar conditions.

To the gradually growing impulse to take one's own life, a very large proportion of modern suicides must be assigned. This impulse takes the form of an absolute yearning for death, thus, seemingly, reversing the normal workings of the mind.

That such cases are usually the result of abnormal conditions cannot be doubted, although it is very far from being true that all, or perhaps a very large proportion of them, are due to what can justly be called insanity. Paradoxical as it appears, there can be no doubt but that many suicides of this class, where no reasonable motive can be discovered, take their own lives because the idea of death is positively pleasurable to them. Members of suicide clubs are doubtless victims of this form of mania, and derive from the contemplation of death, and its actual accomplishment as well, a certain pleasure; unnatural and hideous, it is true, but none the less pleasure. This theory, which seems clearly established, accounts for a large class of suicides that otherwise would be entirely inexplainable.

Modern philosophers who have given much time and thought to an investigation of the nature of suicide, divide it into two classes, rational and irrational. Rational suicide may be defined as the taking of one's own life deliberately because, for some reason, the subject, a rational being, prefers death to life. To this class must be assigned the greater portion of all the suicides of ancient times. This is particularly true of the Brahmins and the Buddhists who, as has been pointed out,

prefer death to life from a religious or superstitious belief. In their cases there is an absence of insanity, unless we are to adopt the views of those who maintain that the taking of one's own life is, in itself, a certain indication of a diseased mind. These people die that they may gain by the act, and their motives appear no more irrational than if they were to desire to live for the same reason. To their eyes, it is the best course they can pursue to insure their own well-being.

Most of the instances of self-destruction among the ancient Greeks and Romans were of the rational character, and were committed with the greatest possible deliberation. In their cases the motive was not to secure a benefit, but to avoid an evil that appeared greater than death. The virgin martyrs of the early Church fall under the same category, while the suicides of those Christians who were laboring under almost overpowering excitement, are classed with those of the Buddhists and Brahmins. This form of suicide is much less common than it was in remote ages. The institution and growth of Christianity has had much to do with the accomplishment of this end, as also has the wonderful advancement in medical science, which, in recent times, has largely reduced the list of so-called incurable diseases and rendered others far less painful.

The irrational suicide is one who seeks death for the sake of dying, and without either expecting to better his condition or escape overwhelming ills of life. In this category must be placed all who kill themselves while insane, or who do so without any reasonable cause, also those who yield to the suicidal impulse, whether it be instantaneous or of gradual development. That some people, entirely sane, commit suicide without what may be termed reasonable cause, is undoubted, yet the great majority of this class of suicides are possessed of clouded minds, as is shown from the statistics of various countries.

In the whole realm of fiction, probably the greatest literary problem that has puzzled scholars is whether or not Shakespeare designed to portray in his Hamlet an insane man or one merely irresolute and wavering. Many critics have indicated

his famous soliloquy on death as showing that he actively contemplated suicide, and was, hence, mentally unbalanced. In the estimation of the author, this wonderful soliloquy shows a clear brain, capable of the keenest and most accurate analysis of motives and consequences. This is particularly true of the concluding lines:

"For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of desprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the thought of something after death,
That undiscovered country from whose bourne
No traveler returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er
With the pale cast of thought, and enterprises
Of great pith and moment, with this regard,
Their currents turn awry, and lose the name of action."

In remote times no indignity was offered to the body of one who had died by his own hand. Even the Jews made no distinction in such a case, as appears from the circumstance that Ahithophel, mentioned in the preceding chapter, who deliberately killed himself, "after setting his house in order," was "buried in his father's grave," the most honorable disposition that could be made of the remains of a Jew. Among Asiatic peoples the question does not appear to have been often raised, and the Greeks and Romans did not generally offer indignities to the bodies of suicides, except as a means of stopping a mania for its commission. In the tenth century suicide was made a crime in England, and three hundred years later the same course was taken in France. This meant a forfeiture of the estates of suicides, and, no doubt, had some effect in suppressing it. In both France and England the old

Roman system was followed, and the law did not apply to those who were driven to the act through insanity.

In many countries it was for centuries the custom to drag the body face downward to the place appointed for public executions, and hang it head downward upon the gallows, after a time throwing it into a convenient ditch. This was long the practice in most of the countries of Europe, and was done in Paris as recently as 1749. These inhuman and barbarous proceedings were early abandoned in England, though followed by others scarcely less revolting. The body of a suicide was buried at the cross-roads, a stake being driven through it, for the purpose of "laying" the ghost of the departed, thus preventing its annoying the neighborhood. The last instance of a burial of this kind in England occurred in 1823. From that time until 1882 bodies of suicides could be buried in churchyards, without religious ceremonies, between the hours of nine and twelve at night. At present there are no restrictions in England, nor are there any penalties provided in the United States.

CHAPTER XXXII

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

Few biblical texts have excited comment and aroused bitter controversy to compare with the one above quoted. A dictum of the Almighty, its wisdom and justice has none the less been assailed in all ages. So general is the prejudice against capital punishment in this country that one of the first questions asked a talesman offered as a juror in a murder trial, is whether or not he is opposed to the infliction of the death penalty. On this question many good and learned men have conscientiously differed, but the weight of opinion is clearly in favor of imposing the death penalty as a means of suppressing murder and other outrageous crimes.

Death has been the penalty awarded murder from the earliest ages. The first murder was not punished capitally, but the perpetrator, Cain, was condemned to till the soil with poor results, and to become a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. Cain objected that his punishment was greater than he could bear, and suggested that, on account of his murderous act, he was certain to meet with death, thus showing that the idea of capital punishment had thus early gained a footing in the world. But the principle is more clearly announced in the succeeding verse, Genesis iv. 15—"And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken upon him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." A further evidence is furnished by the establishment of "cities of refuge" designed to protect murderers from vengeance.

Life has almost universally been regarded as man's dearest

possession; the exception being found among the Buddhists, Brahmins and some other sects, who are often glad to give up earthly existence. Logically, the penalty most likely to deter men from murder and other heinous crimes is death. Some philosophers have declared against this course, claiming that man has no right to take human life, while admitting that he possessed the right, under certain conditions, to deprive him of his liberty as long as he may live, which, according to some of them, is a heavier punishment than death itself. That the extreme penalty has had a marked effect in checking murder cannot be doubted by any one who investigates the subject; and, since prevention of crime is the true end of punishment, this conclusion furnishes a most logical reason for the death penalty.

Among the ancient Jews the usual mode of execution appears to have been stoning to death, and this was meted out to a large class of offenders whose crimes were much less than murder. Thus we read in Leviticus xx. 27, "A man also or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them." With the Hindoos, Chinese and most other peoples of the East, decapitation by the axe or sword is the usual method pursued. The Greeks and Romans employed a variety of means to execute criminals and others whose death was desired. Poisoning was often resorted to, and in this way died some of the most famous men of antiquity, notably Socrates.

The ancient Romans had a way of combining business with pleasure, and condemned people were often thrown to lions in the amphitheatre, to the unbounded delight of vast concourses of people. Crucifixion was another means quite generally employed, as also was boiling in oil. Beheading was, however, recognized as the most honorable mode of suffering death.

Drowning was resorted to in very remote ages, by almost all nations, and has only recently been discontinued in Europe. Four and a half centuries before the beginning of the Christian era the Britons inflicted death by drowning in a quagmire.

In the Anglo-Saxon times, women who were convicted of theft were put to death by drowning. Richard Cœur de Lion decreed that any soldier of his who killed a fellow-crusader during the passage to the Holy Land, should be drowned. In England this mode of execution was discontinued about the beginning of the seventeenth century. "On the 11th day of May, 1685," says William Andrews in his very valuable work, "Old-Time Punishments," "Margaret McLaughlin, aged sixty-three years, and Margaret Wilson, a girl of eighteen years, were drowned in the waters of the Blendoch, for denying that James VII. of Scotland was entitled to rule the Church according to his pleasure. Bearing on this subject there is an important statement in 'Boys' History of Sandwich.' It is recorded that in the year 1313, a presentment was made before the itinerant Justices at Canterbury that the Prior of Christ's Church had for nine years obstructed the high road leading from Dover Castle to Sandwich by the seashore, by a water-mill, and the diversion of a stream called the Gestlyng, where felons condemned to death within the hundred should be drowned, but could not be executed that way for want of water. Further, that he raised a certain gutter four feet, and the water that passed that way to the gutter ran to the place where convicts were drowned, and from whence their bodies were floated to the river; and that after the gutter was raised the drowned bodies could not be carried into the river by the stream, as they used to be, for want of water."

Burning to death as a mode of punishment appears so revolting and inhuman that we can hardly conceive of the possibility of its having been generally practiced by Christian nations, and its abolition within recent times furnishes one of the strongest arguments in favor of the theory that the world is growing better. For centuries, throughout almost the entire of Europe, it was the usual punishment for witchcraft, and for all forms of religious offenses as well. The first to suffer in this way in England was Alban, who was burned at the stake for heresy in the year A. D. 304. Since that day literally thousands of unfortunates have given up the ghost in the midst of fierce flames in England, as well as elsewhere in

Europe. By a singular process of reasoning, burning at the stake of women convicted of civil offenses was regarded as in the nature of a mitigation of hanging. On this point Sir William Blackstone, one of the greatest commentators on the Common Law of England, has this to say: "For as the decency due to the sex forbids the exposing and publicly mangling their bodies, their sentence—which is to be full as terrible to sensation as the other—is, to be drawn to the gallows, and there to be burnt alive;" and he adds, "The humanity of the English nation has authorized, by a tacit consent, an almost general mitigation of such part of these judgments as savors of torture and cruelty, a sledge or hurdle being usually allowed to such traitors as are condemned to be drawn, and there being few instances—and those accidental and by negligence — of any person being disemboweled or burnt till previously deprived of sensation by strangling."

Burning at the stake has been much more common than most people suppose. In Germany alone, during a single century, as many as an hundred thousand people, for the most part decrepit, almost imbecile, old women were burned alive for witchcraft.

Revolting and cruel as such executions were, a single instance may still be cited as illustrating the remarkable advance that humanity has made within a comparatively few years. This burning occurred at Lincoln, England. "Eleanor Elsom," says Andrews, "was condemned to death for the murder of her husband, and was ordered to be burnt at the stake. She was dressed in a cloth 'made like a shift,' saturated with tar, and her limbs were also smeared with the same inflammable substance, while a tarred bonnet had been placed on her head. She was brought out of the prison barefoot, and, being put on a hurdle, was drawn on a sledge to the place of execution near the gallows. Upon arrival, some time was passed in prayer, after which the executioner placed her on a tar barrel, a height of three feet against the stake. A rope ran through a pulley in the stake, and was placed around her neck, she herself fixing it with her hands. Three irons also

held her body to the stake, and the rope being pulled tight, the tar barrel was taken aside and the fire lighted. The account in the 'Lincoln Date Book' states that she was probably quite dead before the fire reached her, as the executioner pulled upon the rope several times while the irons were being fixed. The body was seen amid the flames for nearly half an hour, though, through the dryness of the wood and the quantity of tar, the fire was exceedingly fierce."

The last instance of burning in England occurred March 18, 1789, when a woman named Christian Murphy, alias Bowman, was burned for coining. Shortly after this, the barbarous law was repealed, and an enactment made which provided that, after June 5, 1790, women were to suffer death by hanging, as in the case of men. Burning at the stake was never legally practiced in the United States.

Boiling to death was inflicted upon criminals in Europe several hundred years ago, but was never nearly so common as burning. In England an act was passed in 1531 providing this punishment for poisoners, but it had been resorted to long before this time, both in England and upon the Continent. Many instances might be cited of the infliction of this dreadful punishment in England.

Of all the atrocious and cruel punishments devised by the infernal ingenuity of man, that of pressing to death may be regarded as the most cruel; its legal name, "Peine forte et dure," signifying "strong and hard pain." This punishment was meted out to those who, on being arraigned for felony, refused to plead to the indictment, or "stood mute," as it was termed. Under the ancient Common Law of England one could not be tried for a felony until he had pleaded, and pressing was resorted to to force the prisoner at the bar to answer "guilty" or "not guilty." The reason for standing mute is found in the circumstance that attainder and confiscation of estates to the Crown followed a conviction of felony, while it did not apply to those who were pressed to death. Many men suffered this lingering and agonizing death that they might preserve their property for their families. For a prisoner to peremptorily challenge more than twenty jurors was consid-

ered equivalent to standing mute, and was punished in the same manner.

In the beginning of the thirteenth century, this punishment seems to have consisted only in severe imprisonment with a very low diet, persisted in until the obstinacy of the accused was overcome and he consented to plead. But during the reign of Henry IV. it became the practice to load heavy weights upon the body of the offender, and thus literally press him to death. The following was the method provided by the law:

"That the prisoner shall be remanded to the place from whence he came, and put in some low, dark room, and there laid on his back, without any manner of covering except a cloth round his middle; and that as many weights shall be laid upon him as he can bear, and more; and that he shall have no more sustenance but of the worst bread and water, and that he shall not eat the same day on which he drinks, nor drink on the same day on which he eats, and he shall so continue till he die." At a later period, the form of sentence was altered to the following: "That the prisoner shall be remanded to the place from whence he came, and put in some low, dark room, that he shall lie without any litter or anything under him, and that one arm shall be drawn to one quarter of the room with a cord, and the other to another, and that his feet shall be used in the same manner, and that as many weights shall be laid upon him as he can bear, and more. That he shall have three morsels of barley bread a day, and that he shall have the water next the prison so that it shall be not current, and that he shall not eat, etc."

When the practice of pressing had become well-nigh extinct, those who declined to plead were tortured by twisting and screwing their thumbs with whip-cords until they yielded, or died under the torture. Sometimes both methods were employed in succession, and occasionally the two at the same time

Thomas Spigot, a highwayman, was both pressed and twisted with cords in 1721, and the Nottingham *Mercury*, of January 19 of that year, contained the following account of the transaction:

"Yesterday the Sessions began at the Old Bailey, where several persons were brought to the bar for the highway, etc. Among them were the highwaymen lately taken at Westminster, two of whom, namely, Thomas Green, alias Phillips, and Thomas Spigot, refusing to plead, the court proceeded to pass the following sentence upon them: 'That the prisoner shall be,' etc., as already quoted. The former, on sight of the terrible machine, desired to be carried back to the sessions house, where he pleaded not guilty. But the other, who behaved himself very insolently to the ordinary who was ordered to attend him, seemingly resolved to undergo the torture. Accordingly, when they brought cords, as usual, to tie him, he broke them three several times like a twine-thread, and told them if they brought cables he would serve them after the same manner. But, however, they found means to tie him to the ground, having his limbs extended; but after enduring the punishment for an hour, and having three or four hundredweight put on him, he at last submitted to plead, and was carried back, when he pleaded not guilty." The Rev. Mr. Willette, with the ordinary of the prison, in 1776, published the "Annals of Newgate," and from these we learn further particulars of the torture of the highwayman Spigot. "The chaplain found him lying in the vault upon the bare ground, with 350 pounds weight upon his breast, and then prayed with him, and at several times asked him why he should hazard his soul by such obstinate kind of self-murder. He sometimes lay silent under the pressure, as if insensible to the pain, and then again would fetch his breath very quick and short. Several times he complained that they had laid a cruel weight upon his face, though it was covered with nothing but a thin cloth, which was afterwards removed and laid more light and hollow; yet he still complained of the prodigious weight upon his face, which might be caused by the blood being forced up thither and pressing the veins so violently as if the force had been externally on his face. When he had remained a half an hour under this load, and fifty pounds weight more laid on, being in all four hundred, he told those who attended him he would plead. The weights were at once

taken off, the cords cut asunder; he was raised up by two men, some brandy put into his mouth to revive him, and he was carried to take his trial."

The last case of pressing in England, which terminated fatally, occurred in 1667, when one Major Strangeways was thus put to death. At this horrible execution several of the condemned man's friends were present, and, when he signified that he was ready, piled a large quantity of stone and iron upon the press, but he still lived. Then they stood upon the press themselves, and in ten minutes the wretched man had ceased to live. In 1827 an act of Parliament provided that, where one stood mute, a plea of not guilty should be entered, and the trial proceed.

The execution of the condemned persons by hanging has been common throughout a large portion of the world almost from time immemorial. To this, in the olden time, was added the horrible accessories of drawing and quartering. This form of punishment was at one time termed "godly butchery," by reason of the divine authority which was quoted for its continuance. So great an authority as Lord Coke found abundant precedents in the Bible to support and justify all the horrid details of hanging, drawing and quartering. The gallows of the Anglo-Saxons consisted of two upright pieces of timber connected by a cross-beam over which the culprit was drawn into the air by a rope, dying of strangulation. During the Midle Ages hanging was exceedingly common, the whole country being dotted with gibbets. "Every town, every abbey, and almost every large manorial lord," says Thomas Wright, "had the right of hanging, and a gallows or trce, with a man hanging upon it, was so frequent an object in the country that it seems to have been considered as almost a natural object of a landscape, and it is thus introduced, by no means uncommonly, in medieval manuscripts." In the reign of Henry VI. of England, which extended over thirty-eight years, it is stated that 72,000 criminals were executed. In France the gallows was known as "the lantern," for the reason that a lantern was suspended from its extended arm.

In the olden time, culprits were hanged by making them

stand in a cart beneath the gallows; the cart being withdrawn, the doomed man was left hanging by the neck. In more recent times this and similar expedients were superseded by a falling trap-door, which permitted the body of the condemned to be projected downward by its own gravity. Other devices pull the body violently into the air by means of heavy weights attached to the rope, which are released from their fastenings by the executioner, and allowed to fall.

Hanging, drawing and quartering was the sentence for a long time imposed upon English traitors. It was in the following form: "That the traitor is to be taken from the prison and laid upon a sledge or hurdle—in earlier days he was to be dragged along the surface of the ground, tied to the tail of a horse—and drawn to the gallows or place of execution, and then hanged by the neck until he be half-dead, and then cut down, and his entrails to be cut out of his body and burnt by the executioner; then his head is to be cut off, his body to be divided into quarters, and afterwards his head and quarters to be set up in some open place as directed." As a rule the executioner cut open the chest of the victim, plucked out and held up the heart to the gaze of the populace, exclaiming, "Behold the heart of a traitor!"

Gibbeting, or hanging in chains, was long practiced in Europe, particularly in England, where the practice has come down to recent times. "In atrocious cases of murder," writes Blackstone, "it was frequently usual for the court to direct the murderer, after execution, to be hung upon a gibbet where the act was committed; but this was no part of the legal judgment; and the like is still sometimes practiced in the case of notorious thieves. This, being quite contrary to the express command of the Mosaic law, seems to have been borrowed from the civil law; which, besides the terror of the example, gives also another reason for this practice, namely, that it is a comfortable sight to the relations and friends of the deceased."

As to whether criminals were at any time executed in England by being hanged alive in chains, there is a conflict of opinion, but the weight of authority seems to be in favor of

the affirmative. Almost every district of England has preserved stories of men being hanged alive in chains, and left to die of exposure and starvation. In the famous "Chronicle of England," written by Holinshed, which supplied Shakespeare with much of the material for his historical plays, and which is fairly reliable, it is stated: "In wilful murder done upon pretended—premeditated—malice, or in anie notable robbery, the criminal is either hanged alive in chains near the place where the act was committed, or else, upon compassion taken, first strangled with a rope, and so continueth till his bones came to nothing. Where wilful manslaughter is perpetrated, besides hanging, the offender hath his right hand commonly stricken off."

The last criminal gibbeted in England was George Cook, a bookbinder, at Leicester. This was in 1832. The custom was abolished on July 25, 1834.

Garroting has long been the means of inflicting the death penalty in Spain and her colonies. The word is derived from the Spanish "garrote," which signifies a stick or cudgel. Originally it consisted merely in seating the condemned in a chair fixed to a post, passing a strong cord around his neck and then strangling him by twisting the cord with a stick. In this form it very much resembles the use of the bow-string for a like purpose, much used by the Mohammedan nations; and it is more than probable that the Spanish adopted the garrote from the Moors. For a long time the use of a cord has been abandoned, and a brass collar substituted. This contains a pointed screw which the executioner turns until it enters the spinal marrow where it joins the brain, producing instant death. In the days of the Inquisition, this form of death was granted as a favor to those who recanted their heresies, in lieu of burning alive. It is said by Llorente, in his "History of the Inquisition," that at an "Auto da Fe," or burning, at Cuenca, a poor Jew who had received this most gracious clemency, having noticed the bungling manner in which the executioner performed the operation on two wretches who preceded him, said to the former: "Peter, if you are likely to strangle me so clumsily, I had much rather

be burned alive." Garroting still continues the official method of executing criminals with the Spaniards.

One of the most diabolical punishments every devised by man was that of breaking on the wheel, which was long employed in France and Germany for the execution of certain classes of criminals, as traitors and parricides. By this inhuman method, the criminal was placed upon a carriage wheel with his arms and legs extended upon the spokes. The wheel was then revolved, and the executioner proceeded to fracture his limbs in different places with an iron bar, until life was extinct. Exactly this method was not always pursued. By way of sooner terminating the terrible sufferings of the condemned, the executioner would sometimes administer what was termed "coups de grace," which consisted of two or three blows on the breast or stomach, calculated to kill the victim. Sometimes, in France, the sentence contained a provision that, after the first or second blow, the sufferings of the culprit were to be terminated by strangulation. Executions on the wheel continued in France until the Revolution of 1789. In Germany it has occasionally been inflicted during the present century, in cases of treason of an aggravated character.

Decapitation by the axe and sword has been a common means of executing the death penalty from very early times. It was employed in the East in remote ages, and was always regarded as one of the most honorable modes of suffering death at the hands of the law. It was early used in France, and, indeed, all European nations. Beheading appears to have been introduced into England by William the Conqueror, who employed it as a means of executing criminals belonging to the nobility and higher ranks of the people. The first Englishman to go to the block was Walter, Earl of Huntingdon, Northampton and Northumberland, in 1076. Since that time very many of the nobility of England, and not a few royal personages, have met their death at the block. One of the earliest to fall was Sir William Wallace, the Scottish patriot, whose name is known to every schoolboy. Betrayed by some of his own countrymen, he was delivered to King Edward of England and conveyed to England, where, after a

mockery of a trial for treason, he was beheaded, August 23, 1305. His death was accompanied by acts of singular barbarity and cruelty. The last person to suffer at the block in England was Lord Lovat, who was decapitated April 7, 1747, for espousing the cause of the Pretender, though before that time he had committed almost every crime in the calendar.

Beheading by means of mechanical contrivances was long in use in certain localities, but never became universal, or even general, in any nation until the invention of the guillotine. One of the most remarkable of these contrivances was used at an early day in Halifax, England, and was known as the "Halifax Gibbet." It is thus described in Holinshed's Chronicle, already quoted:

"There is and has been, of ancient time, a law, or rather a custom, at Halifax, that whosoever doth commit any felony, and is taken with the same, or confess the fact upon examination, if it be valued by four constables to amount to the sum of thirteen-pence half-penny, he is forthwith beheaded upon one of the next market days—which fall usually upon the Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays—or else upon the same day that he is convicted, if market be holden. The engine wherewith the execution is done is a square block of wood, of the length of four feet and a half, which doth ride up and down in a slot, rabet, or regall, between two pieces of timber that is framed and set upright, of five yards in height. In the nether end of a sliding block is an axe, keyed or fastened with an iron into the wood, which, being drawn up to the top of the frame, is there fastened by a wooden pin—with a notch made in the same, after the manner of Samson's post—unto the middest of which pin also there is a long rope fastened, that cometh down among the people; so that when the offender hath made his confession, and has laid his neck over the nethermost block, every man there present doth either take hold of the rope—or putteth forth his arm so near the same as he can get, in token that he is willing to see justice executed—and pulling out the pin in this manner, the head block wherein the axe is fastened doth fall down with such a violence that if the neck of the transgressor were so big as that of a bull, it should be cut

in sunder at a stroke, and roll from the body by an huge distance. If it be so that the offender be apprehended for an ox, sheep, kine, horse, or any such cattle, the self-same beast or other of its kind shall have the end of the rope tied somewhere unto them, so that they being driven, do draw out the pin whereby the offender is executed."

Forty-nine persons, as appears from the Parish register at Halifax, suffered death by means of this machine, from the 20th day of March, 1541, the earliest recorded execution, to the 30th day of April, 1650, when the last criminals, Abraham Wilkinson and Anthony Mitchel, were thus deprived of life. The gibbet axe is still preserved. It weighs seven pounds and twelve ounces, is ten and a half inches in length, seven inches broad at the top, and nearly nine inches at the bottom.

The "Scottish Maiden" was another mechanical device for decapitating criminals. It was not an independent invention, but was after the directions of the Earl of Morton, Regent of Scotland, who had witnessed an execution by the Halifax gibbet. It was constructed in 1565. The "Maiden" was not unlike the Halifax gibbet, after which it was modeled. According to Rogers, its peculiar name was derived from "mod-dun," a Celtic word originally signifying the place where justice was administered. According to others, the name "Maiden" was given it for the reason that it was a long time after its construction before it was first employed to behead a criminal. At least one hundred and twenty persons met their death by the Maiden, among them several of the noblest men in Scotland, as, Sir John Gordon of Haddo, President Spottiswoode, and the Marquis and Earl of Argyle. The latter is reported to have said, as he laid his head upon the block: "This is the sweetest maiden I have ever kissed." The use of this instrument was discontinued in 1710. It is still preserved at Edinburgh, in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

Of all the modes for executing criminals, probably the guillotine has excited the widest interest. This is not so much due to its peculiar construction as to the long list of distinguished men and women who have suffered death by it, par-

ticularly during the "Reign of Terror" that disgraced France, and humanity, in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

The child of the Revolution, through all the changes and modifications of her political structure—from the Kingdom, through the Republic, the Directory, the Consulate, the Empire, down to the Republic of our own day—France has never discarded the guillotine, nor allowed its polished blade, like the sword of Hudibras, to grow rusty through lack of usage.

When the "horrid wheel" and its attendant iron bar were not resorted to, decapitation by the axe and sword had for ages been the death awarded French criminals of rank; the gallows, called the "lantern," being reserved for the common culprit. The cross, the stake, quartering, drawing, boiling and flaying alive, were sometimes resorted to as already indicated, but only in the cases of regicides, and those guilty of peculiarly atrocious crimes.

In 1789 Dr. Joseph Ignace Guillotin, a physician of some note, began to agitate in the Assembly, of which he was a member, the question of making executions uniform and by decapitation. Having no machine to present for the accomplishment of the work, he gained time by suggesting the following article: "In every case of capital punishment, the mode of execution shall be the same; the criminal shall be decapitated by means of a mechanical contrivance." This article was referred to a committee, and did not become a law until 1791.

As the article did not provide a means of decapitation, Charles Henri Sanson, the executioner of Paris, addressed a memorial to the minister of justice, showing the difficulties attendant upon the use of the sword and axe, and recommending the adoption of some machine that would keep the sufferer's body in a horizontal position. The publication of this memorial induced Dr. Guillotin to call upon Sanson, and many conferences ensued. Together they searched the criminal annals of Europe for descriptions of machines. Four engravings, three German and one Italian, rewarded their labors, but all of them were manifestly imperfect. The Italian machine,

which bore the date 1555, was called the "maunaia," and consisted of a large axe working between two perpendicular boards, which was allowed to fall upon and sever the neck. Inferior varieties of the maunaia were found to have been used in Scotland and Persia, and even in France, Marshal Montmorency having been executed at Toulouse in 1631, by means of a sliding axe; but the investigators do not seem to have learned of the Halifax gibbet.

In 1790, Sanson had formed the acquaintance of a German engineer, resident at Paris, named Schmidt. The executioner told Schmidt of his perplexity, whereupon, after a moment's hesitation, the latter took a piece of paper, and traced thereon a few hurried lines, and handed the drawing to the executioner. It was the guillotine!

Sanson hastened to inform Dr. Guillotin of his good fortune. The doctor was beside himself with joy, and on the thirteenth of April, 1791, he described the new apparatus to the Assembly. In his excitement and enthusiasm he declared that the culprit would only feel a slight freshness upon the neck, and added, "With this machine I cut your head off in a twinkling, and you do not suffer!" whereupon the Assembly burst into loud peals of laughter, and for a moment it seemed that the doctor had ruined his cause. When the merriment had subsided, however, a discussion ensued, and Dr. Antoine Louis, the king's physician, was appointed to inquire into the merits of the machine.

A conference between Sanson, Louis and Guillotin resulted, at which the king himself was present. After his Majesty had examined the plan of Schmidt, he shook his head, and remarked: "The knife has the form of a crescent; do you think a knife thus shaped would be suitable for all necks? There are some which it certainly would not cut." Sanson was appealed to, and agreed with the king, who, smiling with pleasure, took up a pen and changed the crescent into an oblique line; thus actually drawing, with his own kingly hand, that terrible knife which, two years later, was to sever the neck of Citizen Louis Capet, otherwise King Louis XVI. of France.

On March 7, 1792, Dr. Louis submitted his report to the Assembly, recommending the adoption of the machine as drawn by Schmidt, with the alternative of the crescent or oblique knife. On March 20th the report was adopted, and Dr. Louis requested to superintend the construction of the first machine. It was built by a carpenter named Guidon, at an expense of 5,500 francs. When completed, Sanson experimented on three corpses, two being successfully decapitated with the oblique knife, while the crescent failed with the third. The latter was accordingly rejected, and that suggested by King Louis adopted. A week later, Sanson tried its merits upon a thief named Pelletin, the first victim of the guillotine.

The machine as first devised, and which has been but slightly modified, is constructed as follows: Upon a scaffold, from seven to eight feet in height, two vertical parallel bars are made fast, and united at the top by a strong cross-bar. To this cross-bar an iron ring is attached, through which is passed a rope that holds in position an iron ram, weighing from sixty to seventy pounds. The ends of the ram are arranged to work in grooves in the vertical bars, which retain it in position, allowing it to slide up and down. On its lower side this ram is armed with a large knife set in an oblique position, to strike with what might be termed a "draw cut." To a heavy board, called the "weigh-plank," strong straps are attached with which to bind the criminal under the arm-pits and over the legs. The neck is placed exactly beneath the blade and secured in position by means of two cross-bars. The ram, released by pulling a cord, descends with great force, the oblique knife severs the neck, the head falls into a receptacle filled with bran, while the body is placed in a wicker basket lined with leather.

Thus the guillotine, though a synonym for horror and despair, had its origin in principles of humanity and genuine democracy. Dr. Guillotin, who, though trained to the art of healing, devoted so much time to the art of killing, was a genuine humanitarian, and died in 1814, believing that he had done mankind a service by providing a means of execution

swift, certain and as nearly painless as the nature of death admits.

The machine was at first called the Louisen, and Louisette, in honor of Dr. Louis, but the song-writers, a potent fraternity in France, dubbed it the guillotine, a name it has since borne.

The most recent addition to the modes of execution is "electrocution," or depriving a criminal of life by passing a powerful current of electricity through his body. This method has been adopted in New York, and is now the only mode employed in executing the death sentence in that State. The culprit is seated in an insulated chair, and a broken wire connected through his body, the application being made on the lower portion of his legs and the back of his head, at the base of the brain. At an appointed signal, a strong current of electricity is turned upon the wire, which produces, as it is claimed, almost instant death. This method has met with some opposition, notably by electricians and electrical companies, who claimed that discredit was being placed upon their profession and their business, but this has now well-nigh subsided, and the mode seems permanently established, and seems likely to be quite generally adopted in the future.

The office of public executioner has always been regarded with a feeling akin to horror, and those who have filled the position have generally been of a low and brutal order, sometimes actual criminals themselves. In many countries, the office has been, by custom rather than law, hereditary. This was particularly true of the German States. In France seven generations of the Sansons, one of whom has already been referred to in this chapter, were the public executioners of Paris. These are popularly styled "Monsieur de Paris." It is said that the offices of executioner in the early days of England descended from father to son. In the United States there is no such office, the duties falling to it being discharged by the sheriffs of the different counties, who acquire no disgrace from the circumstance, it being merely an incident of their official duties.

For the most part, the death penalty is now inflicted only

as a punishment for murder, treason or piracy, though in some countries the list is longer. Blackstone, writing about 1765, says that 160 different offenses were punishable by death in England at that time. More than four-fifths of these originated with the first three Georges. Capital punishment was abolished about the year 1874 in Switzerland, Portugal, Holland and Roumania, and is not at present inflicted in some of the United States.

The comparatively few crimes at present punished capitally, together with the more humane methods of administering the death penalty, argue very strongly in favor of what the author has tried to make this volume prove, viz.: that, under the influence of religion and civilization, men are rising in the scale of moral being; that the worst portion of the history of mankind is a thing of the past, and that a brighter era has at last dawned upon a sin-laden world.

THE END

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